TALES OF MY LANDLADY.

EDITED BY

PEREGRINE PUZZLEBRAIN.

ASSISTANT

TO

THE SCHOOLMASTER OF GANDERCLEUGH.

Omnia vincit amor.

IN THREE VOLUMES.



VOL. I.



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INTRODUCTION.

It is now more than a year, since I thought myself upon the point of becoming the happiest man in the world: the death of a very distant relation had given me possession of an easy independence, and the mother of a charming girl, whom I had long loved, consented to bestow her daughter's hand upon me.

Nothing remained to complete my felicity but my Sophia's consent to fix a day for our union; when an incident of a nature, apparently trivial, obliged me to undertake a very irksome task; and doomed me, for a considerable period, to the miseries of celibacy.

Conversing one evening with Sophia, I happened to speak slightingly of a novel which was lying upon the table, and, from defending it: . . . she proceeded to speak, in what I though. exaggerated terms; in

favour of similar publications. One of my faults, and I must own that it is an unpardonable one, in a would-be Benedict, is an impatience of contradiction. I am afraid that I supported my opinion with more warmth than politeness would strictly warrant, and I concluded by a declaration, that I believed it very possible to manufacture works of fancy from the short story which adorned the pages of a magazine, to the ponderous romance, without any portion of natural genius whatever.

I was surprised to see the dove-like eyes of my Sophia lighten with indignation at a speech, which was wholly void of intentional offence to her; for heaven knows, I was totally ignorant at that time, that she was a constant writer for every one of the magazines that do not pay for contributions. Surprise, mingled with the fear that I had offended her, although I knew not how, rendered me silent; and after a short pause she rose, and saying that she had an engagement, coldly wished me a good evening.

The next day I was refused admittance. Almost distracted, I applied to the mother of my offended divinity, and from her I soon learned the extent of my offence. Such of my readers as have ever been in love, will readily believe, that I heartily cursed my folly, when I found that all attempts to conciliate my Sophia were vain. At length I succeeded, but with considerable difficulty, in procuring an interview, in which I tried to make my peace, by unsaying all that I had previously said against her favourite works; but my recantation availed nothing. Sophia had taken it into her head, that my general censure of light works was aimed particularly at her writings; and this idea rendered her so indignant, that it was a long time before she would even grant me a patient hearing.

At last her countenance assumed something of its former suavity, and she said with a smile, which, however, had something of malice in it: "Well, Mr. Puzzlebrain, if you are really anxious to make up a quarrel, which, however, is solely at-

tributable to yourself, there is one way, and one too, which I am sure you will acknowledge to be very easy."

"Name it, my dearest Sophia," cried I; "name any thing you please, and judge of the force of my attachment by the readiness with which I will comply with your wish."

"Nay," answered she, "it is a mere trifle, only to write a novel, a romance, or a few volumes of tales, four or five will be sufficient."

Conceive, if you can, reader, the change which these words produced in my feelings: it was absolutely some minutes before I could articulate, during which Sophia surveyed me with malicious pleasure.

At last I stammered out, that as it must be a work of time to compose so many volumes, I hoped she would not delay my happiness on that account; and after our union, if she still continued to wish it, I would set about a novel as soon as she pleased.

But the cunning gipsey was determined not to come to any compromise. "A work

of time," cried she; "you surprise me! Surely you forget that nothing can be easier than to manufacture works of this description."

"Dear Sophia, be merciful!"

"Merciful! Am I not merciful? Can you seriously call it a punishment to do what you have yourself declared requires only a little labour; and would you grudge a little labour to oblige me?"

The tone in which these words were uttered was irresistible. "No," replied I, rapturously kissing her hand; "I will do whatever you please."

Happy in being thus restored to favour, I believed, when I quitted her, that nothing would be easier than to complete my work in a few weeks; and on reaching my house I sat down, though it was then eleven o'clock at night, to begin it.

At the moment when I dipped my pen in the ink-stand, it occurred to me that so far from having laid down any regular plan for my work, I had not even considered whether it was to be a novel or a romance; I laid down my pen, and throwing myself

back in my chair, I shut my eyes and began to meditate upon the subject.

After passing more than two hours in a vain endeavour to arrange a plot for my work, I was roused by the watchman calling half past one, and I retired to bed, with my spirits somewhat depressed by this first difficulty.

But this was nothing to what I experienced the next day; I sat down to my desk with a determination not to quit it till I had arranged the plot of a novel. During eight hours I wrote and tore and wrote again, without being able to produce one to my satisfaction; at last I flung down my pen in a rage, execrated my stupidity, and the ill-nature of Sophia, paced my library till I was absolutely fatigued, and at last recollected that it was two hours after my usual time of dining.

In the hope that with the assistance of Bacchus I might be better able to propitiate the Muses, I drank nearly dou my usual quantity of wine, and heroically resolving to commence my work with spirit, I returned to my library, opened my

desk, and had actually manufactured six lines of a neat address to the reader, when I dropped asleep ; and after a nap, which lasted two hours, was awakened by my man's coming into the room to know what I chose for supper.

It was too late to think of doing any thing more that night, and I went to bed with a determination to rise very early the next day, and to devote the whole morning to study ; nor could I help anticipating the pleasure I should feel in presenting Sophia, in the evening, with the first few pages of my work. I fell asleep with my head full of the most agreeable ideas, and set about my task the next morning with the utmost alacrity.

But whether my want of gallantry, in falling asleep in their service the preceding evening, had disgusted the Muses; whether I am naturally too sincere to succeed in fiction, or whether I am too stupid to form what the ladies would call a *readable* one, I know not; certain, however, it is, that my plot, for I did at last arrange something like a plot, was woefully defi-

cient in incident, and totally devoid of probability.

Bad as it was, I hugged myself on having succeeded so far; but I resolved not to shew my work to my mistress, till I had made some progress in it. From what I have already related, the reader will have no difficulty in believing, that my progress was very slow; there were various reasons for this, my mistress and my friends engrossed a good deal of my time; exercise and sleep drew largely upon the remainder; and of those hours which I devoted to my work, more than two-thirds were often wasted in a vain endeavour to strike out new incidents, alter my *dramatis personæ* to advantage, or give an air of novelty to some trite reflections.

"A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind,"

said Garrick in his farewell prologue, and in truth, my mode of estimating the literary corps of Grub-street, underwent a very considerable change. But while this revolution was taking place in my opinions,

three months had elapsed, and one sheet of my work was not yet completed. I tried every means to get Sophia to remit my penance, but in vain: all I could obtain was a mitigation of it. She consented to accept of three volumes instead of five; but to my infinite mortification she declared, that her doors should be shut upon me, till I presented myself before her with my MS. completed.

As I saw clearly that nothing but absolute seclusion would ever enable me to finish the task my lovely tyrant so arbitrarily insisted upon, I determined to take a lodging in the environs of London, shut myself up from all society, and devote myself wholly to my pen, till it was completed.

The following morning I began my search, and surely of all lodging hunters, I deserved to be reckoned the most fastidious. One condition on which I positively insisted was, that there should be no lodger beside myself; and another, that the house should be uniformly quiet, as I declared that the least noise, either day

or night, would induce me to move directly.

At length, I was fortunate enough to find apartments, such as I desired, in the house of a respectable widow, in whose favour I was prepossessed the moment I cast my eyes upon her.

She appeared to be something more than fifty, and though she could never, even in her youthful days, have been termed handsome, her countenance was still pleasing; a physiognomist would at the first glance have given her credit for good sense and benevolence. Her neat and plain garb was perfectly suited to her years, and her manners were respectful without that fawning obsequiousness, too general among people of her class.

Our bargain was made in a few words; I ordered my trunk to be moved to my new habitation directly, and in the course of a few hours I was as completely at home, as if I had been the old lady's inmate all my life.

The following day I resumed my task, and by the dint of continual application,

I made some progress; but my sedentary life soon began to affect my health: in less than a fortnight I grew pale and thin, and completely lost my appetite. I had, on taking my apartment, given my landlady a bank note to provide what was necessary for my table, with directions to call upon me as soon as it should be expended; as I thought that that must be the case, though I had received no intimation of it, I desired to see her.

After we had settled the business on which she came, we fell into chat on various subjects, and after glancing once or twice from me to my writing-desk, my landlady observed, that she feared I applied too closely to business.

The kind solicitude which the good woman's look and tone expressed, pleased me; it was beside more than a fortnight since I had seen a female, and as I am naturally attached to the sex, the sight, even of an old woman, after having been so long deprived of all female society, was a treat to me. I soon discovered that my landlady was sensible and intelligent, and

had seen a good deal of the world, and before we parted, I engaged her to make my tea herself every evening.

A few evenings only had elapsed, before I felt an inclination to take the good woman's opinion of my work. I recollected Moliere used to read his plays to an old woman, and surely a wight of such very slender pretensions as myself, need not be ashamed to follow his example. In short, I confided the history of my novel to my landlady, and my confidence was soon followed by an earnest request from the old lady to hear a chapter or two.

While I was reading, I was very attentive to the manner of my auditor, and I soon had the mortification, though she was more polished than to express her disapprobation by a yawn, as Moliere's old woman occasionally did, to perceive, that the only feeling which my laboured sentiment, and fine-spun declamations excited, was complete weariness: to say the truth, I felt for some moments the most author-like resentment at this insult to my talents; but this feeling soon subsided, and I could

not help owning to myself, that if I was in her place, I could not have been able to behave so well.

This discovery, however, completely sickened me of my task, and during three days I did nothing but fidget about my apartment, beat the devil's tattoo, begin half a hundred letters to Sophia; and finally devote all the novel readers and writers in the world, except my dear girl herself, to the infernal gods.

The enquiries of my landlady drew from me at last the cause of my evident disturbance of mind. "Don't you think, my dear Madam," cried I, as I concluded my philippic on the obstinacy of my mistress, "that I would be justified in carrying off this dear perverse girl, and forcing her to me give me her hand?"

"I believe," replied my landlady, "I can put you in a way to obtain it, without having recoursd to force." "How so?" cried I eagerly. "Why," replied she, "it has fallen to my lot to witness a good deal of what may be termed the romance of life. You seem, Sir, to be at no loss for

language," here she with difficulty restrained a smile; "and I fancy I can furnish you with incident sufficient to fill two or three volumes."

In the warmth of my gratitude, I was almost tempted to embrace my kind friend, whose considerate proposal I immediately accepted. I took notes of the various communications which she made to me, and having now something to work upon, I proceeded with tolerable rapidity.

Sometimes, indeed, the demon of ennui, who is, I suspect, the evil genius of scribblers, would perch upon my writing-desk, and cast her spells around me, till my faculties sunk under her torpid influence, and I became totally incapable of continuing my task. But my subjugation to this malign spirit did not continue long, and as soon as I escaped from her thraldom, I redoubled my diligence.

At length, with a pleasure, which can be conceived only by one who loves as passionately as I do, I wrote the delight-

ful word FINIS, at the end of my third volume: it was then three o'clock in the morning, and before nine I was on my way to the house of Sophia.

I found her seated at breakfast with her mother: she received me with a blush of pleasure, which added new lustre to her brilliant eyes; and when with an air of triumph I presented my manuscript, she extended her hand to receive it with a smile that repaid me for all my trouble and anxiety.

Such of my readers as have ever been in love will readily believe, that my Sophia found my work very superior to the common run of such performances; but the more she praised it, the more my conscience upbraided me with the deceit I was practising, since in strict justice, the work belonged rather to my landlady than to myself; and although I was very certain, that it owed all its merit to Sophia's belief that it was the child of my brain, I yet felt that there was a degree of meanness and injustice in appropriating

what was, in part at least, the property of another.

To be brief, that vulgar principle, for so one of our modern philosophers has defined common honesty, triumphed, and I acknowledged the truth, to the fair arbitress of my destiny.

Though a slight shade of mortification crossed her brow, she soon dispelled it. "I find," said she, with a good humoured smile, "that Cupid's power of working miracles, is more limited than I had supposed; but at least, the little god has taught you to recant some of your heretical opinions, on the easiness of bookmaking."

I eagerly interrupted her, with a declaration that I should henceforward regard it as a very difficult task.

"Well," replied Sophia, "that is something gained, however; and after all, you have still as good a title to the tales as many other authors; nay, in fact, you have a better, for if the greater part of your work is not your own, at least it is honestly come by."

I kissed with transport the hand of my dear little apologist, nor did I release it, till I had gained a tacit consent, that in one month it should be my own.

In the midst of my happiness, I was not unmindful of my worthy landlady. I presented our joint property to a respectable publisher, whom I requested to read the work, and if he thought it worth publishing, to let me know what sum he could afford to give for it; as I intended to present the produce of it, and as much more as I could spare, to the good woman, to whom I consider myself indebted for the hand of my Sophia.

We soon agreed about the terms, but a difficulty arose as to the title, which, as my publisher assured me, was a very essential point.

"And pray," said Sophia, who happened to be present, "why should you not call it, *Tales of My Landlady?* Certainly no title can be more appropriate."

Although I had half a dozen names in my head, which I thought would have sounded better, I had profited too much

by experience, to give an opinion in opposition to her's, and the MSS. was named on the spot.

And now, with all due humility, let me solicit Messieurs the Reviewers, of whose general talent no one entertains a higher opinion, not to break a butterfly upon the wheel. I am persuaded that the most austere of our so much dreaded periodical critics, would, if placed in a similar situation to that which produced the Tales of My Landlady, feel enough of the difficulties attendant on the composition of a work of fancy, to incline them, in future, to temper justice with mercy. And if the said critics have wives, sisters, or daughters, I adjure them, by the delightful recollection of their past, or the anticipation of their future triumphs, over the hearts they most prize, to make my cause their own, and to shield from the critic's lash, a trifle, which owes its existence to that passion, that so often makes the bliss or misery of our lives.

PEREGRINE PUZZLEBRAIN.

TALES

OF

MY LANDLADY.

THE USES OF ADVERSITY.

CAROLINE MORDAUNT, at the age of sixteen, possessed a good heart, a brilliant understanding, and a beautiful person. Fortune had been as liberal as nature in her gifts to Caroline; she was an only child, and at the death of her father would be one of the richest heiresses in England.

Enviable, however, as the lot of Caroline appeared, she was in reality miserable; she was naturally obstinate and self-

willed, and her father's excessive indulgence had fostered these baleful propensities, till they rendered her a torment to herself and all around her. She had lost her mother, while she was yet an infant; and Mr. Mordaunt, who almost idolized his wife, felt, that deprived of her, the child, whom she solemnly bequeathed to his paternal love, was the only tie that could bind him to existence.

The health of Caroline was remarkably delicate during her infancy, and Mr. Mordaunt, fearful of the effect which even a slight opposition to her wishes might have upon her frame, positively forbad her governess and her attendants to contradict her in any thing. A few years passed, and the excellent health which she enjoyed, afforded no longer any pretext for the excessive indulgence with which she was treated; but the fond father could not endure to see the lovely countenance of his darling disfigured by rage, and Caroline became by degrees a froward, intractable girl, who was equally a plague to his domestics and himself.

When she was about twelve years old, her governess, Mrs. Nelson, one day entered the library of Mr. Mordaunt with so much discomposure, both of manner and countenance, that he eagerly enquired whether any thing was the matter with Caroline.

"Nothing, Sir," replied Mrs. Nelson, making an evident effort to restrain herself, "but what is always the matter: she has just told her Italian master, that she will not learn his language grammatically; and because he wished to convince her that she could not acquire a correct knowledge of it in any other way, she replied with so much rudeness and asperity, that he took his leave, with a declaration that he really must decline giving her any more lessons."

Mr. Mordaunt sighed deeply. "I am sorry for it," replied he; "but I think Signor ——— is himself in some degree to blame. He should have endeavoured to excite her admiration of the language, and to make her take an interest in it, before he asked her to study the gramma-

tical part of it: however, I will see him, and endeavour to settle the matter."

"Believe me, my dear Sir," said Mrs. Nelson, "it will be of no use. Miss Mordaunt never will, never can, become a really well educated woman, as long as you persist in your present plan."

"Would to Heaven," cried Mr. Mordaunt, "it was possible for me to change it; but Caroline's susceptibility is so keen, that I am certain, were I to pursue severe measures, her health, perhaps her life, would be the sacrifice."

"I would not be an advocate for severity," replied Mrs. Nelson. "What I would advise, is, to place Miss Mordaunt at —— —— school: it is not yet too late, by proper management, to correct her faults, and if any one is capable of doing it, I think Mrs. D—— is the person. I shall resign the charge of Caroline with regret, for spite of her faults, I love her as if she was my own; but I can no longer in conscience continue an office, useless to her, and painful to myself."

Mr. Mordaunt was really grieved at the

intention of Mrs. Nelson, and in the hope of inducing her to change it, he resolved to talk seriously to Caroline on the subject of her uncomplying temper. He knew that she loved her governess, and he hoped that the fear of losing her, would produce some change for the better.

This hope was in part well founded. Caroline really felt the warmest affection for Mrs. Nelson; and when her father informed her that she was going to leave them, she burst into tears, and anxiously enquired why.

"Can you ask, Caroline?" said Mr. Mordaunt, in a tone of unusual severity. "You, who are yourself the sole cause of Mrs. Nelson's departure."

"Me, papa," cried the conscious culprit. "I am sure, I have done nothing lately; that is, nothing very bad."

"Perhaps, you consider it nothing, to treat your instructors with rudeness."

"I am quite sure I never treated Mrs. Nelson rudely."

"But if you conduct yourself in such a manner as to disgrace both her precepts

and example, excellent as they are, can you expect that she will still continue with you? No, Caroline. Mrs. Nelson sees with sorrow that you are irreclaimable, and she is determined to spare herself the disgrace of having it said, that she educated you."

Caroline's pride was roused by the coolness of her father's manner: her tears ceased, and she enquired in a tone of resentment, "if he too thought her irreclaimable?"

"I would hope that you are not; but alas! every day renders this hope still more faint."

"Do not say so, papa," cried Caroline, clasping him round the neck. "You shall not repent thinking well of me. From this day, I will try to conquer all my faults; and if Mrs. Nelson would but remain with us, she should soon see that I will never be a disgrace to her."

That moment repaid Mr. Mordaunt for the anxieties of years. Parental love blinded him, to the unpleasant truth, that his daughter's meditated reformation was

more the result of pride than principle; and her natural sincerity, and the earnestness with which she promised, made him sanguinely hope that she would keep her word.

Touched by the ingenuous manner in which Caroline owned her fault, and promised amendment, Mrs. Nelson consented to remain as long as she should keep her word; and this condition was a still stronger stimulus to Caroline's exertions in the art of self-government.

During six months, the behaviour of Miss Mordaunt was such, as to satisfy her governess and masters, and to delight her father. Signor ——— was recalled, received a submissive apology from his pupil, and was perfectly propitiated, by the readiness with which she applied herself to study Italian grammatically, and the rapid progress she made in it. Sometimes, indeed, *malgré* all her resolutions to the contrary, Caroline relapsed into her old habits; but she quickly became sensible of her fault, and the readiness with which

she acknowledged, and strove to atone for it, might have procured her pardon, even from less partial judges than her father and Mrs. Nelson.

CHAPTER II.

In the seventh month after Caroline's reformation, Mrs. Nelson was taken ill of a fever, which was soon pronounced infectious. Trembling for the safety of his darling, Mr. Mordaunt flew to the chamber of Mrs. Nelson to bear her from it; but Caroline was proof to command and intreaty. Twining her slender arms round the bed-post of the unconscious sufferer, who was in a paroxysm of delirium, she resisted with almost supernatural strength, her father's endeavours to carry her from the room.

Compelled at length to yield, the violence of her emotions threw her into strong hysterics, which left her in a state of such extreme weakness, that her medical attendant was seriously alarmed; and when he found the next day, that she had already imbibed the infection, he considered her case as nearly hopeless.

A few days put a period to the life of the estimable Mrs. Nelson, whose loss would at any other time have been deeply felt by Mr. Mordaunt; but his every thought was then engrossed by Caroline, over whose bed he hung in an agony, such as a doating parent alone can feel; but when he received the dreadful intelligence, that her recovery was considered impossible, his grief apparently affected his brain.

"I deserve punishment," cried he, "I know I do; but oh! my God, strike me, and spare her, she is innocent. Why do you say?" continued he fiercely, "that she prompted me. I tell you it is false, she must not, shall not suffer; I alone deserve death."

He raved till he was quite exhausted, and an opiate being administered to him, he enjoyed eight hours of tranquil repose, and awoke to unhoped for happiness.

The crisis, which the physicians were of opinion would terminate Caroline's existence, was safely passed, and though still

in great danger, there was some reason to hope that she might recover.

This hope, faint as it was, probably saved Mr. Mordaunt from distraction: it was many days, however, before hope was converted into certainty. Caroline was at length pronounced out of danger, and his own life became once more valuable, in the eyes of Mr. Mordaunt.

Caroline grieved for Mrs. Nelson with a perseverance, which her natural volatility rendered surprizing. Alarmed at the continuance of her melancholy, Mr. Mordaunt took every means to divert it; he took care to make choice of a lady, to succeed Mrs. Nelson, who was of a remarkably lively disposition; and he positively interdicted all serious application to study, till Caroline's melancholy had subsided.

The new governess, Madame Rocca, was of a much more accommodating disposition than her predecessor; she soon saw Caroline's faults, but she thought that she could render them serviceable to herself, and that by unlimited indulgence,

she could gain her affections; she saw that Mr. Mordaunt doated upon his daughter; and she was in hopes, through her attentions to Caroline, to soon render herself a personage of considerable importance in his eyes: she had little doubt indeed, if she was once domesticated in his family, of soon figuring in the character of its mistress. This expectation was not altogether ridiculous. Madame was still pretty, she had not quite attained the age at which conquest becomes doubtful, and her knowledge of the human heart gave her, as she thought, every possible chance of subjugating that of Mr. Mordaunt.

She was, however, completely deceived in her expectations of attaching Caroline, who, young as she was, appeared perfectly to comprehend, and thoroughly to despise the character of her governess. The pernicious indulgence of Madame, however, produced the effect, which might naturally be expected from it; and Mr. Mordaunt saw with sorrow, that in the course of a few months, his daughter had resumed all her old habits.

When Caroline was about thirteen, Mr. Mordaunt received one day a letter from an old friend, of whom he had lost sight for some years, but to whom he had in his youthful days been greatly attached. This gentleman, whose name was Dormer, had, when a boy, evinced a decided predilection for the army: his father wished to have made a merchant of him, but nothing could persuade young Dormer to embrace any but the military profession; his father accordingly purchased him an ensigncy; he was ordered abroad, and from that time Mr. Mordaunt lost all trace of him.

The fate of poor Dormer was similar to that of many others; he had neither money to purchase, nor interest to procure promotion, and after thirty years service, he found himself a superannuated lieutenant on half-pay. While young, and eminently gifted with personal graces, he had resisted all the attacks of Cupid, and was set down by all his friends as a decided old bachelor. To the surprize, however, of every body, he married an amiable young woman, whose little fortune of

three thousand pounds formed an excuse, with the prudent part of the world, for this unexpected step.

Mercenary motives had no share in the choice of Dormer; he loved his wife tenderly; the birth of a little girl added to his affection for her, and for some years the humble roof of Dormer exhibited a scene of felicity, too perfect, alas! to be lasting. The death of Mrs. Dormer first recalled her husband to a recollection, that life was but a state of probation; for his little girl's sake, he struggled against the grief with which this event overwhelmed him; but a blow soon succeeded it, which brought his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.

He had preserved the principal of his wife's fortune untouched; an offer was made him to employ it, in a manner so extremely advantageous, and so apparently safe, that he closed with it. Three months after the death of Mrs. Dormer, the person in whose hands the money was placed broke, and the miserable Dormer saw his daughter reduced to beggary, through his own imprudence.

Already heart-wounded, and advanced in years, Dormer soon sunk beneath this blow. In the hope of recovering some part of his property, he quitted his cottage in Wales, and hastened to London; chance threw him in the way of Mr. Mordaunt, whom he had not seen since he was a boy of fifteen: he soon found that the benevolent disposition which Mordaunt had evinced, even at that age, had suffered no change by time. He shewed the warmest sympathy for Dormer's misfortunes, and by volunteering his protection to Fanny Dormer, he removed a weight of sorrow from the heart of her father.

Shortly after his meeting with Mordaunt, Dormer closed his eyes in peace. He felt confident, that he bequeathed his daughter to the guardianship of a man of honour and humanity, and he trusted, that the father of the fatherless, would be to her a parent.

Fanny Dormer soon became the inmate of Mr. Mordaunt, whose behaviour to her was perfectly paternal. Volatile, and in-

considerate as Caroline was, she sympathised in the grief of the young orphan; and Mr Mordaunt hoped, that the happiest consequences would result from her introduction to his family.

Miss Dormer was two years older than our heroine, her character formed by a mother, who was herself a model of every feminine virtue, was as near perfection, as frail human nature could be: gentle, equable, firm, where she knew herself in the right, and open to conviction, where she was wrong; her excellencies placed the defects of Caroline in a still more conspicuous point of view.

The young people soon became mutually attached, but their characters were too opposite for them to agree; sincere by nature, and too high spirited to flatter, Fanny frequently used the privilege of friendship to reprove Caroline, who affected to laugh at her, for playing the monitress; but in reality, stood more in awe of her, than of any one else in the world.

An instance of this occurred, which

gave violent offence to Madame Rocca. The young ladies were invited to a children's ball, which was to be given on the birth-day of one of their youthful acquaintances. Fanny, who was yet in mourning for her father, would have declined the invitation, had not Mr. Mordaunt made a point of her accepting it. Caroline, who was very fond of dress, wished to be particularly brilliant, and her indulgent father presented her with a bank note, of more than sufficient value to pay for any dress she chose to order.

Accompanied by Madame, she set out in high spirits, for the residence of a fashionable dress-maker. When they were near the top of the Hay-market, the impatient Caroline ordered the coachman to drive faster; the man obeyed, and as he rattled down the Hay-market, a child who was passing fell, and before the coachman could pull up his horses, the wheel passed over the child.

The little sufferer was carried into a shop, and Caroline and her governess immediately followed; he was apparently but

little injured, but the terror of his mother made a lively impression upon Caroline. Madame had humanity and consideration enough to send instantly for a surgeon, who relieved the fears of the anxious parent, whose joy vented itself in a flood of tears.

CHAPTER III.

UNTIL the surgeon had pronounced that the child was not dangerously hurt, Caroline had kept aloof; but she now approached his weeping parent, whose dress denoted the extreme of poverty, and putting her purse into her hand, she motioned to Madame to follow her, and quitted the room.

The governess had observed the action, but knew not the extent of the gift, and as soon as they were seated in the carriage, she began to talk of the shock her feelings had received; in a few minutes, however, she interrupted her panegyric upon dear self, by a hasty declaration, that the coachman was going wrong.

"No, he is not," said Caroline; "I ordered him to return home."

"Oh, very well, *ma petite*. I suppose you are too much disordered by what has happened, to order your dress this morning?"

Caroline made no reply. The following morning, while Mordaunt was absent, a servant announced a poor woman who was very anxious to speak to Miss Mordaunt.

"I dare say it is the mother of the poor boy; do, dear Caroline, let her come up," cried Madame; but Caroline, without replying, sprang down stairs, and beckoning the woman into a parlour, bolted the door.

"Your child, your little boy," cried she; "how is he?"

"Thank heaven! Madam, he is better than I dared to hope; it is not on his account that I have troubled you; but," taking out the purse which Caroline had given her the day before, "I was fearful you did not know, at least, that you did not consider, the sum that was in your purse when you gave it to me."

"Oh, yes, I did; I knew it very well, and if it was ten times as much, you should have had it."

"But, my dear young lady, I cannot take it. I am not very badly off; and a lady so young as you are, to give away such a

sum, without the knowledge of your papa, pray pardon me, but indeed, I cannot think it is right."

"Well, perhaps it is not; but, if it is a fault, I am sure it is one papa will readily pardon; so put up the money, for I will not take it, and come again soon to tell me how your boy is; but mind, not a word of the purse," and Caroline skipped away in a moment.

Madame was dying with curiosity to know what passed. "Well, I suppose she came to thank you, my dear," said she, when Caroline re-entered the school-room, No reply. "It was her duty, certainly, to shew her gratitude to her benefactress; but you should not affect any mystery on the subject with me, my dear Caroline. I suppose the poor woman was quite enthusiastic in her thanks, and I do not wonder at it, so kind as you have been to her. But come," continued she, finding that Caroline continued provokingly silent, "had not we better order the carriage to St. James's-street?"

"No, Madam."

"But, my dear, you have no time to lose, in giving orders for your dress?"

"I have already given my orders."

"And without consulting me? Really, Miss Mordaunt, I think you might as well have taken my opinion upon the subject."

"It has lost all its importance in my eyes, since yesterday," said Caroline; "and now, pray, Madam, say no more about it."

Caroline attributed the accident of the day before, entirely to her having desired the coachman to drive faster, and she had desired both Madame and him, not to mention it to her father. Fanny, however, was informed of it, on condition that she also should keep it secret.

The evening of the ball came, to the great mortification of Madame, without her having a peep at Caroline's dress; but when after all her anticipations of the striking appearance which her pupil would make, she saw her enter the drawing-room dressed in a muslin frock, which she had worn before, she looked aghast, and even

Mr. Mordaunt, accustomed as he was to his daughter's whims, seemed visibly displeased.

"Pray, Caroline," said he gravely, "to what cause am I to attribute the extreme plainness of your appearance to-night? Was the sum I gave you insufficient to purchase a more showy dress?"

"No indeed, papa; it would have purchased me a very beautiful one, if I had not given it away."

"Given it away!" cried Mr. Mordaunt in astonishment. "And pray why so?"

Caroline now related the accident which had happened, as she believed, through her fault, and described with much *naïveté* what had passed between herself and Mrs. Moore (the mother of the child.) "And now, papa," said she, as she concluded her little narrative, "I hope you will not be very angry with me."

Tears of pleasure stood in the eyes of the fond father, at this trait of genuine goodness of heart; and never, perhaps, did Caroline dance so well, and with so much grace as on that evening.

Unfortunately, this little adventure furnished Madame with a subject of panegyric, which she seemed to consider inexhaustible; and Fanny was seriously vexed to perceive, that when she was not in the presence of Mr. Mordaunt, she magnified the sacrifice made by Caroline, till our heroine herself began to consider that she had performed a very sublime action.

Methinks, at this instant, more than one pretty mouth is opened to exclaim against the folly and vanity of Caroline. Softly, my fair censors, consider that she was but fourteen, and recollect the power which adulation has on all girls of that age.

One day, when Madame had related the story, of which, by the way, she made a very pretty little romance, to some of Caroline's young friends, who had been at the ball, she concluded with a still more florid eulogy on Caroline than usual. Vexed to perceive that Fanny listened in silence, and with a grave air, she turned to her, and exclaimed with much malice, "I recollect, Miss Dormer, at this mo-

ment, that I have never heard you give any opinion about Caroline's conduct in this affair: perhaps it may not strike you in the same light as it does us. I know you are a nice discriminator, and from the silence you always observe when it is mentioned, I suspect that you see something wrong. Confess," added she, in a taunting tone, "is not there something in it to censure?"

"Madam," replied Fanny calmly, but with spirit, "if I have withheld my share of praise, it was because I think that praise on such a subject is an implied censure: the action of Miss Mordaunt was simply a humane one, and I conceive that I should have insulted her, if I had expressed my surprise at her performance of it."

The face of Madame was absolutely purple with rage, and a blush of mortified vanity tinged for a moment the cheek of Caroline; but it subsided almost instantly, and holding out her hand to Fanny, she said with an affectionate air, "you are

quite right, my dear Fanny, and I thank you."

Madame Rocca had seen for some time, with real displeasure, the gradual influence which Miss Dormer was obtaining over the generally unmanageable Caroline; it is true, this influence did not go the length of producing a reformation, but it was infinitely mortifying to her to perceive, that although Fanny never flattered the foibles of Miss Mordaunt, she was an object both of respect and affection to her; and she was not ignorant, that all her own fawning obsequiousness had not procured her the smallest share of Caroline's good-will. Hitherto prudential motives had induced her to hide the dislike she had conceived to Fanny, but rage conquered prudence, and *sans cérémonie*, she attacked Miss Dormer in a style of coarse invective, which roused all the natural haughtiness of Caroline.

"I do not know, Madame," cried she, while her eyes sparkled with indignation, "by what right you presume to treat my

papa's ward in this manner. I am sure that when papa desired you to consider her as his other daughter, he never meant to authorise your treating her with rudeness and insult; but I shall appeal to him on the subject. Come, Fanny," continued she, taking the hand of Miss Dormer, " come with me to my room."

The policy of Madame convinced her, that her stay in the family depended upon an immediate and ample apology, and she made one, the meanness of which disgusted Fanny still more than the insolence which occasioned it.

CHAPTER IV.

PLEASED with the delicacy of Mrs. Moore, Mr. Mordaunt visited her: he went determined to be liberal, and certainly his generosity was not checked by the enthusiasm with which the good woman spoke of Caroline. Those traits of feeling and generosity, however, which she occasionally manifested, were sadly obscured by her general conduct, and as she advanced towards maturity, the contemplation of her future destiny cost her father many a sigh.

Shortly after the children's ball, an alteration took place in the behaviour of Mr. Mordaunt, which very much alarmed Fanny; he had been always grave, and occasionally subject to fits of abstraction: these fits became now more frequent than ever, and a settled melancholy took place of the occasional cheerfulness of his manner. Often as he fixed his eyes on Caro-

line, Fanny perceived them fill with tears, and an indistinct dread that some misfortune was impending over him, took possession of her mind.

Every thing, however, went on in the usual way, till Caroline had attained her seventeenth year, when she made her *début* in high life, with every natural and acquired advantage. Nothing was talked of, but the lovely young heiress; and the adulation which followed her footsteps, might have served to turn an older and a wiser head than her's.

Luckily for Caroline, she was too proud to be vain; and she treated the complimentary nothings, which were addressed to her, with a degree of coldness, and often of disdain, which very soon disgusted those who had no view beyond the amusement of the moment.

One day Mr. Mordaunt came home in better spirits than usual. "I bring you good news, girls," cried he; "I have got a beau for you worth pulling caps for; young, handsome, sensible, every thing, in short, but rich."

"And pray, papa," cried Caroline, "who is this nonpareil?"

"Charles Saville, the son of your mother's most intimate friend; she doated on him when he was a boy." The recollection of Mrs. Mordaunt chased away the little gleam of cheerfulness, which animated the countenance of poor Mordaunt, and telling the girls that he expected Mr. Saville in the evening, he soon afterwards retired.

The evening brought Mr. Saville, agreeably to his appointment. He was a fine young man, apparently about seven and twenty. Though far from handsome, there was something in his countenance, which prepossessed you instantly in his favour, and his manner very soon confirmed the impression.

The fixed look with which he regarded Caroline, called a blush into her cheek. "Pardon my involuntary rudeness, Miss Mordaunt," cried he: "though I was but a boy when I last saw yout angel mother, I recollect her features perfectly, and never

surely, was there a resemblance more striking than yours to her.

Mordaunt sighed, he felt that Caroline's mind bore little resemblance to her mother's; and he hastened to change the subject.

They conversed upon a variety of topics, and Caroline would have thought Mr. Saville the most agreeable man she had ever seen, had she not been secretly piqued at his behaviour to herself. Accustomed to be the first object, wherever she was seen, she was first surprised and next angry to find, that Saville treated her only with that attention, which common politeness required, and addressed the chief part of his discourse to her father.

He soon became a constant visitor at Mr. Mordaunt's; and spite of the mortification her vanity had received from the indifference with which he continued to treat her, Caroline imperceptibly began to like his society: indeed it was impossible to be much in his company without liking him; his constant cheerfulness, unaffected good sense, and extensive information, rendered

him a most delightful companion: even Madame Rocca; who was the last person in the world to imbibe a partiality for any one, often declared, that he was really very agreeable, and that it was a thousand pities he was so poor.

In one of Saville's morning calls, he found the ladies as usual in the drawing-room. Fanny was at work, Madame was turning over the pages of a novel, and Caroline lounging on a sopha, with her lap-dog in her arms: after the usual compliments, "I don't know," said Caroline, "what is the matter with me to-day, I am positively good for nothing."

"I hope," replied Saville, "you are not indisposed."

"No, only very stupid, infected, in short, with that malady which the French call *ennui.*"

"Indeed! that is a singular disorder at your time of life; will you allow me to prescribe for you?"

"Willingly."

"Well then, I begin by recommending a little fresh air; after that, if you find

your spirits better; take your pencil, harp, or needle, and I will answer for it that you will soon lose your *ennui*."

"And if I don't find my spirits better?"

"Then you must try another remedy. In this great town you cannot be at a loss for objects of benevolence. Visit, my dear Miss Mordaunt, the abode of the starving mendicant; behold the poor sufferer who groans under the real evils of poverty and disease; and trust me, that those fictitious ones, with which you afflict yourself, will quickly vanish into empty air."

Caroline was silent, but her crimsoned cheek shewed that she was not insensible to the reproof which Saville's words conveyed.

"Upon my word," said Madame Rocca, flippantly, "it is a thousand pities you were not brought up to the church; but I assure you, Miss Mordaunt stands in no need of your remedy: benevolence is positively her passion; I know nobody half so generous."

"Pray, Madame Rocca," cried Caroline impatiently, "say no more on this subject; your praises are still more humiliating than the reproof which I have just received." And with this ungracious reply she retired. In a short time afterwards Madame Rocca, whose office had long been a sinecure, quitted the house of Mr. Mordaunt, allured by an advantageous offer from a Mr. Alderman Guzzlemore, a rich widower, to superintend the completion of his only daughter's education.

CHAPTER V.

It was impossible for Saville to be ignorant of the faults of Caroline: her natural sincerity rendered them obvious, even to the most superficial observer; and Saville, who well remembered the feminine virtues of her mother, was struck with surprise and concern, to find that Caroline's character was so totally different.

Yet spite of her faults, she gradually gained upon his good opinion; nay, strange as it may seem, these very faults sometimes heightened his admiration of her virtues, by the strong contrast in which they placed them: he saw that she was haughty, passionate, and self-willed; but he saw, also, that she was liberal, feeling, and sincere: she was still young enough to render it possible to effect a favourable change in her character, and

for the first time in his life, Saville regretted his limited fortune, because it precluded the possibility of his seeking her hand.

Caroline's triumph over the heart of Saville was not the work of a moment; many months passed, before she became an object of serious interest to him; and so far was she from suspecting the conquest she had gained, that she regarded him as a cold-hearted censor, who viewed her faults with as little toleration as he would those of his great grand-mother. "I protest," said she, to Fanny one day, "that man is insufferable: he is always so provokingly right, that he gives one no pretence to find fault with him; and with all the rigidity of his notions, he can be so pleasant; and even when he mortifies one most, seems to have so little desire to hurt one's feelings, that I find it impossible to quarrel with him. Your dispositions are so exactly similar, that I should not wonder if you were to marry; and mercy upon me, if that should be the case, my faults will receive such severe

castigation, that I shall not know how to bear it."

" Don't terrify yourself with the anticipation," said Fanny laughing, "of an event, which will never take place. Mr. Saville's choice is already made, or I am much mistaken, and that choice is certainly not me."

" Indeed!" cried Caroline eagerly; " and pray can you guess who it is?"

" Why, I believe I can; but as it is possible that I may be mistaken, I shall keep my opinion to myself, till I am certain that I am in the right."

The look which accompanied these words, called a blush into the cheek of Caroline, who was from that day a strict observer of the looks and manners of Saville, and spite of the care with which he guarded his sentiments, she soon discovered the hold that she had upon his heart.

It is not wonderful that this discovery was a matter of triumph to a young giddy girl like Caroline, and that she determined to reduce her censor to the humblest

of her slaves, before she honoured him with her hand, if indeed she ever was prevailed upon to do so.

From that hour she took pleasure in exhibiting, in the most glaring colours, those propensities, which she knew could not fail to call forth animadversion. Saville saw that her conduct was designed to wound him, but it made no change in his manner towards her: he became, however, more serious than usual, and spoke of taking, in the autumn, a journey to Scotland, where he had some property.

A slight indisposition, the consequence of the dissipation in which Mr. Mordaunt's mistaken indulgence allowed Caroline to pass her whole time, confined her, for some days, to the house; her evident languor and depression of spirits, induced Saville to think that it might be possible to rouse her to a sense of the folly, not to say criminality, of her pursuits.

Had Caroline supposed that the mild, and sensible remonstrance which he addressed to her on the subject, came from

a disinterested friend, it might have had considerable weight, for she was so dissatisfied with herself and her mode of life, that it would not perhaps have cost her any great effort to change it; but the supposition that Saville's interference sprang from a desire to fetter her free-will, was insupportably galling to her haughty spirit; and she resented with a degree of indignant bitterness, which shocked Saville, what she styled, his self-appointed censorship.

"I cannot apologize, Miss Mordaunt," replied he, "for a liberty, which your father sanctions, and which the hereditary friendship that has so long subsisted between our families, in my opinion fully authorizes; but since my fraternal regard offends you, I promise henceforth to be silent."

Caroline could scarcely refrain from a smile at the emphasis which he laid on the words fraternal regard. "Is it even so," thought she. "Does his proud spirit still struggle in the chains, which his pride forbids him to acknowledge; but he shall

acknowledge, aye, and glory in them, ere I deign to accord my pardon for his presumption."

Filled with the flattering idea of soon seeing him a humble suppliant at her feet, she saw him depart, without relaxing from her *hauteur*, but not being quite satisfied with her own conduct during their interview, she was silent respecting it to Fanny.

CHAPTER VI.

THREE days after this conversation, Caroline received a summons to attend her father in his library: the gay air with which she entered it, was instantly checked by perceiving the mingled expression of grief and anxiety, with which Mr. Mordaunt regarded her.

" I sent for you, Caroline," said he, with solemnity, " to ascertain whether the fond indulgence with which I have hitherto treated your every wish, will be rewarded by an act of duty on your part, equally conducive to your happiness and to my peace."

" Any thing that I can do, papa, I am sure I will," replied Caroline.

" What I desire, I am convinced is in your power," said Mordaunt. " I have

for a long time past observed with pleasure, that you appeared sensible of the worth of Mr. Saville; and I hoped, ere this, you would have empowered him to solicit my consent to your union."

A burning blush suffused the countenance of Caroline, who replied in a voice scarcely audible, "Mr. Saville, papa, has not given me any reason to think, —to imagine——"

"Caroline," said her father, somewhat sternly, perceiving that she could not finish the sentence, "as yet, I have never had reason to suspect you of insincerity: tell me then frankly and truly, are you not convinced that Saville loves you."

Caroline felt it impossible to reply to this question; but her silence was in itself an assent to the truth of Mordaunt's supposition, and he continued, "circumstances, which it is impossible for me to enter upon to you, make me anxious in the highest degree, to see you settled in life. I have this morning received a proposal for you, from Sir Henry Dashmore;

but I think, Caroline, you cannot entertain even a wish that it should be accepted."

"Oh no, papa," cried Caroline eagerly.

"I thought not. I would not allow myself to suppose, that a handsome person and specious manners could blind you to the defects of Sir Henry's character. Saville is in truth the son of my choice. I know what has passed between you; I know too, what you perhaps are not aware of, that Saville has in consequence taken his leave of us for ever; but a word of mine will be sufficient to recall him. Suffer me then, Caroline, to present him to you as your destined husband; by so doing, you will secure your own felicity and remove a weight of sorrow from my heart."

Struck with the idea of a plan between her father and her lover, all the natural haughtiness of Caroline led her to revolt from being thus, as she conceived, duped into a marriage. "The ready assent, Sir," said she, "which I have just given to your

rejection of Sir Harry Dashmore's addresses, is, I flatter myself, a proof of my duty. I regret that you should desire another, which I cannot give you, for I would die a thousand times, sooner than become the wife of Mr. Saville."

We will not detail the scene which followed. Mordaunt had recourse to intreaty and command in vain. The indistinct hints which he gave of some impending misfortune, Caroline supposed, were thrown out as threats against her disobedience. Mr. Mordaunt, provoked by her obstinacy, assumed for the first time the high tone of parental authority; but alas! he was doomed to feel with bitterness, that he had not "trained up his child in the way she should go." Caroline could not practice the lesson of obedience, for she had never learned it, and she quitted the presence of her father, more indignant at what she thought the harshness of his treatment, than grieved at the pain, which she evidently caused him.

Miss Dormer had, for a long time, seen

with more grief than surprise, that the influence which she once had over Caroline was at an end. She loved Miss Mordaunt too tenderly, to be an unmoved spectator of her follies; and the excessive adulation which Caroline was in the habit of receiving, had heightened her natural impatience of controul, into an absolute abhorrence of reproof, though presented to her in the most gentle form.

Fanny had shared all the advantages of education equally with Caroline, but she had profited by them far more: she was in fact perfectly accomplished; and her naturally high spirit led her to wish, that her attainments could be turned to a means of procuring her an independent subsistence. She intimated her wish to Mr. Mordaunt, but it was some time before he would listen to it; and when at last he gave a reluctant consent, it was on the express condition, that she should return to his house the moment she found herself uncomfortable.

Among the visitors at Mr. Mordaunt's, who distinguished Fanny by particular

attention, was Lady Sensitive. Her ladyship had a large family of daughters, and was reckoned an exemplary mother. She was one day lamenting that the girls were about to lose their governess, who was very clever. and she feared that she should have great difficulty in replacing her.

This was an opportunity, which Fanny was determined not to lose: she mentioned her wish to obtain such a situation, and notwithstanding her modest estimate of her own talents, Lady Sensitive was too well satisfied with them, to hesitate a moment about engaging her. Fanny, however, made her engagement conditionally, that it met with Mr. Mordaunt's approbation, and the next morning she spoke to him on the subject.

" My dear child," said he, with a deep sigh, " I cannot blame the laudable spirit which induces you to wish for independence; but a short time since, I would not have heard of your leaving us; it was, and still is, my intention to consider you as my daughter, if circumstances permit me to do so in pecuniary mat-

ters; but a cloud at present hangs over me, the bursting of which must involve me and my poor Caroline in utter and hopeless ruin. I have yet a hope, though but a faint one, that it will pass away; but Oh! my dearest Fanny, if it does not, promise me that you will be a sister to my Caroline. Alas! alas! if what my fears presage should happen, she will then be desolate indeed."

Fanny pressed the hand of her benefactor to her lips, but her heart was too full for speech. Mr. Mordaunt wanted not professions to convince him of her sincerity; he folded her to his bosom with parental tenderness, and silently breathed a wish, that Caroline's disposition had resembled her's.

Nothing could equal the surprise and indignation of Miss Mordaunt, when Fanny announced her intended change of situation. This resolution, Caroline could not help attributing, in a great measure, to her own altered behaviour; but though her conscience loudly reproached her with

it, pride prevented her from making an apology.

"So, then," cried she, "this is your love for me, your affection for my father, to abandon us for strangers!"

"Indeed, dearest Caroline, you wrong me. My leaving you is not a proof of want of affection; but ask your own heart, whether, situated as I am, and receiving as I have, from the bounty of your generous father, such an education, I ought to waste my youth in idleness. If it was possible for me to be of use to you, I would not leave you, but it is not."

"Nay, now you know the contrary. You know that your society is the greatest comfort to my father; and if I am too foolish, or too untoward to profit by your advice, surely it is not generous to punish him for my fault. Besides," continued she, with a playful smile, "how do you know that I shall always continue incorrigible?"

The affectionate look, with which, as she concluded her speech, Caroline press-

ed the hand of her friend, touched Fanny sensibly, and for a moment her resolution wavered. She asked herself whether she was justified in leaving her earliest friend, while there was a possibility that her stay would be serviceable to her; but she soon recollected with a sigh, how many vain efforts she had already made; she saw that Caroline was so completely drawn within the magic circle of folly and dissipation, that no rational hope remained of freeing her from their baleful influence: she knew that her sincerity had already lost her much of Caroline's affection, and she felt, that even on that account, a separation was mutually desirable.

Although sensibly wounded by the determination of her friend, Caroline offered no further opposition to it, and a few days afterwards Fanny became the inmate of Lady Sensitive.

Celina Sensitive, the eldest daughter, had just been presented. She was one year older than Caroline, little indebted to nature for personal graces, and still less for

those mental qualities, which might have compensated for the want of them. She possessed, however, a degree of cunning, which enabled her, in a great measure, to conceal her deficiencies, and a sort of intuitive knowledge of the weakness of others, that rendered it easy for her to turn them to her advantage.

Miss Sensitive was placed in a situation sufficiently mortifying to a young woman of spirit: she was one of a numerous family: the fortune of Lord Sensitive was barely sufficient for the support of his rank in life; and as neither himself nor his lady were disposed to support many privations, their children's expenses were consequently much more restricted than those of young people in high life usually are.

Naturally fond of shew and parade, and possessing too little self-respect to care what sacrifices she made to obtain them, Miss Sensitive was well pleased to be the attendant satellite of Caroline, than a bright planet in the galaxy of fashion.

The open, generous disposition of Caroline, left her purse completely at Miss Sensitive's mercy. That young lady had *tact* enough to perceive, that much as Caroline loved flattery, she had sufficient delicacy to be disgusted with those who assailed her with open adulation, and with a dexterity worthy of a veteran in the art of manœuvring, she contrived to wear an appearance of blunt sincerity, at the very moment in which she flattered Caroline in the most unprincipled manner.

One instance of this will be sufficient, to give the reader a competent idea of Miss Sensitive's skill in the art of adulation.

CHAPTER VII.

Among those who disputed the pre-eminence in beauty and fashion with Miss Mordaunt, was a very dashing girl of the name of Delmore, whom nature had done much to qualify for the character of a professed beauty: she had fine features, a tall genteel figure, and a wonderful command of countenance, if not of temper. She was, besides, an adept in all the mysteries of the toilet; and though far inferior in real beauty to Caroline, she more than once divided with her the attention of the gentlemen; an offence, which our heroine secretly determined to take the first opportunity of punishing.

Some time, however, elapsed, without affording Miss Mordaunt the means of putting this *amiable* design in execution; but a ball, to which she knew Miss Delmore was as well as herself, invited, promised

to afford her the means of humbling her haughty rival. Had the object of Caroline been of the greatest importance, she could not have thought more often or deeply on the subject: whether she should burst upon the assembly her beauty, heightened by all the aids of dress, or whether attired with elegant simplicity, she should trust for victory to her natural charms alone, almost distracted her. At last, vanity turned the scale in favour of a simple dress, and attired in plain white, her beautiful auburn tresses braided in the Grecian style, without any ornament, she sat down to wait for her chaperon, with a heart throbbing with pleasure, and a cheek flushed with the glow of gratified vanity.

Her triumph was as short as such triumphs deserve to be; her chaperon kept her waiting an unconscionable time, and as her *fort* was not patience, she had fretted herself pale, before she reached the scene of her anticipated triumph. No words can describe her mortification, when on entering, the first object that

struck her eye was Miss Delmore, looking more lovely than she had ever seen her, and surrounded by a crowd of admiring beaux.

This sight so completely disconcerted Caroline, that she thought no longer of contending for the palm of victory; it would have been, indeed, a vain attempt, for she never appeared to so little advantage. Elated at the sight of her discomposure, Miss Delmore was in extravagant spirits; she laughed, chatted, coquetted, and finally succeeded in drawing round her chair, for she only danced two dances, every beau whom Caroline wished to attract.

The grace with which Miss Mordaunt danced, attracted, however, the admiration of a gentleman, who sat near her rival, and the warmth with which he expressed it, drew a contemptuous smile and a glance at Caroline from Miss Delmore, which our heroine observed, without knowing to what she was to ascribe it. Vexed and mortified more than pride would permit her to own to herself, Ca-

roline returned home early, more than half inclined to quarrel with herself, for the littleness of mind, which she was conscious she was guilty of; but these thoughts were put to flight the following morning, by a conversation which she had with Miss Sensitive.

"Do you know, Caroline," cried that young lady, entering her dressing room, and throwing herself with the ease of intimacy into a chair, "that I am come to reproach you."

"Indeed; and pray why so?"

"For the mortification which you inflicted upon poor Miss Delmore last night."

"Mortification," repeated Caroline gravely. "You joke; I never saw Miss Delmore in such high spirits."

"Pray, my dear," replied Celina, "have you never read of people smiling on the rack? You may depend upon it, that Miss Delmore's spirits were of a similar description. Poor girl! I really pitied her."

"I cannot, however," said Caroline, "conceive why."

"Because young Frankland, the only man in the room whom she cared a farthing about, was so captivated with you, that he had neither eyes nor ears for any one else; and what was rather ludicrous, he selected her as an auditor of his raptures."

"Why?" cried Caroline, endeavouring, though vainly, to suppress a smile. "That was certainly rather provoking; but I should like to know how I am to blame for that?"

"Not for that, certainly; but in pity to the poor girl, you should not have been so plainly dressed. It was mortifying enough for her to be completely eclipsed by you, without hearing the praises which were lavished on your beauty, mingled with encomiums on the just and elegant taste, which led you to despise the unnecessary aid of ornament."

Reader, can you forgive the folly that led the misguided Caroline to swallow

eagerly the intoxicating draught thus presented to her? Little did she then foresee that the time was nearly arrived, when a series of sufferings and sorrows would teach her by degrees, a more rational way of thinking.

One day, soon after the departure of Fanny, Mr. Mordaunt entered the apartment of his daughter hastily. "Caroline," said he, in a voice choaked with emotion, "I have a long journey to take, and you must accompany me; hasten instantly to have all your valuables packed: in two hours we leave London for ever."

A faint sickness stole over the heart of Caroline. Struck with an excess of alarm, such as she had never felt before, she tried to question her father, but he repelled her enquiries with a sternness wholly unusual to him, and repeating, that in two hours they must go, never to return, he quitted her.

The unhappy girl wasted more than half the time allowed her for preparation, in endeavouring to assign a reason for their intended departure. She recollected how

often and how anxiously Fanny had noticed the change in her father's manners; but that circumstance afforded no clue to guide her conjectures. Pecuniary embarrassments, she conceived her father could not have. His high sense of honour and strict propriety of conduct forbade the supposition, that the commission of a crime was about to drive him from his native country. Bitterly did Caroline regret, at that moment, the absence of Miss Dormer, who was with Lady Sensitive's family in the country; and when at last she summoned courage to ring for her woman, and begin her preparations, her tremour and agitation rendered her nearly incapable of directing what should be done.

Her surprise and alarm increased, when her father placed her in a hired carriage, and she saw that he did not take with him a single domestic. Her request for the attendance of her woman had been peremptorily refused, but she had no idea that her father would travel without attendants. Unable to bear the dreadful feelings which overwhelmed her, she raised her eyes to

question Mr. Mordaunt, but terror rendered her speechless, on beholding the dreadful change in his countenance.

His features were absolutely livid, and the wild, and even fierce expression of his eyes, gave Caroline a momentary suspicion that his senses were deranged.

This suspicion was heightened by his grasping her hand, and asking in a tone of voice, which made her shudder, whether she would promise not to curse him.

" Oh Heaven ! my father," cried she, " how can you suppose me so lost to humanity ! Curse you ! Oh ! never ! never !"

" I have deserved it, Caroline," said he, and he relapsed into gloomy silence. They were now just off the stones, and the carriage drove on with the greatest rapidity. The shades of evening were already closing in, when a loud voice called to the driver to stop, and the next instant a pistol was presented at the carriage window. Mr. Mordaunt raised his arm to turn it aside, at the same moment it went off, and Mordaunt, covered with blood, sunk upon the shoulder of his daughter.

Happily for Caroline her senses fled, and she escaped the dreadful sight of her father's dying agonies. The ruffian who had perpetrated this execrable deed, now, assisted by another, rifled the carriage of all the valuables it contained. One of them, took from the pocket of Mr. Mordaunt a sealed packet, but finding in it only written papers, he threw it with a curse back into the carriage.

No sooner were the ruffians out of sight, than the driver hastened to procure assistance. Fortunately there was an inn at no great distance, and thither the wretched Caroline and the remains of her unhappy father were conveyed. The attempt to remove her brought back her senses; but as the first object that met her eyes was the corpse of her murdered father, she fell into strong convulsions, and in that state was borne to the inn.

CHAPTER VIII.

The landlady, a decent humane woman, sent instantly for the village apothecary, who shook his head at the sight of our heroine, and pronounced that it would be a miracle indeed if she recovered. He bled her, however, and ordered her a composing draught; and then, at the landlady's desire, assisted her in taking an inventory of what the robbers had left.

Two trunks, containing the wearing apparel of Caroline and her deceased father, were all that their rapacity had spared. A casket, which contained her jewels, and a box which she believed was full of valuables, together with her father's watch, purse, and pocket-book were gone, as was also her own.

This discovery did not damp the zeal with which Mrs. Fletcher interested herself for the unfortunate Caroline; and

finding that she awoke from an unquiet sleep in a strong delirium, Mrs. Fletcher deemed it proper to send immediate intelligence of the dreadful events which had happened, to Mr. Mordaunt's residence, which, from a card in his pocket, she had discovered was in Berkeley-street.

Her son, a lad about seventeen ,se t out on this melancholy errand. He was beginning to relate his sad tale to the domestic, who opened the door to him, when a gentleman, who was crossing the hall, came forward, and taking him into the library, listened with more curiosity than feeling to the account which he gave of the dreadful transaction.

When he had finished, the gentleman paused, and then said, that he knew not exactly what could be done in the business. "The wretched man," continued he, "whose fate has in some measure expiated his guilt, was flying from the pursuit of justice: he had fraudulently possessed himself of a property, which belonged by right to his cousin Mr. Pem-

broke, for whom I have in my professional capacity taken possession of this house. Mr. Pembroke is at present abroad; and so great is his detestation of the deceased, that I know not whether he will chuse to be at the necessary expense of his funeral."

"To whom, then, Sir," said Fletcher, "am I to apply?"

"I really can't say. I rather think that Mr. Pembroke is the only relation he has in the world."

"Surely, then, Sir," cried Fletcher, "if that is the case, Mr. Pembroke will not suffer him to be buried by the charity of strangers."

The man of law seemed a little abashed. "I—I— really can't say at this moment; I will consider. I believe though you are right. I think I shall venture to send an undertaker."

"And the young lady, Sir?"

"Oh, as to her, she must do the best she can: she has friends, at least I suppose so."

"God knows she has need of them," said Fletcher with a sigh.

"Why yes, poor girl, her situation is certainly very bad; but I am quite sure that Mr. Pembroke will not be at a shilling expence on her account, except, indeed, that she should happen to die; but I suppose there is no danger of that."

"I believe there is very great danger, Sir," replied Fletcher.

"Well, perhaps, it will be so much the better for her. It is impossible for her to live happily under the load of disgrace which will attach to her from her father's vile conduct."

"Ah, Sir, if all children were made answerable for the conduct of their fathers———"

Poor Fletcher's common-place reflection was stopped, by the lawyer's telling him, in rather an imperious tone, that he could not spare any more time to talk upon the subject, that he would give orders for the funeral; but as to Miss Mordaunt's expences, he desired that it might be under-

stood, he had no intention of being answerable for one shilling upon her account. So saying, he turned haughtily upon his heel, leaving Fletcher somewhat astonished at the sudden change in his manner; a change, which our readers will not wonder at, when they learn that his father was obliged to visit New South Wales, in consequence of his mistaking another gentleman's pocket for his own; a circumstance, of which Fletcher had never heard, though the lawyer's conscience transformed his casual observation into a personal insult.

Honest Fletcher returned home very ill satisfied with his success. During his absence, Providence had brought to the relief of the poor sufferer her early, in fact her only friend. Lady Sensitive with her daughters and Miss Dormer, stopped at Mrs. Fletcher's, in their way to London. Her ladyship was, as she said, greatly shocked, but she had such a dread of infection; and as Caroline was delirious, she was really certain that her disorder must be a fever of the most dangerous sort;

and in that persuasion she quitted the inn as soon as she had changed horses.

That her ladyship did not really believe Caroline's disorder was contagious, was sufficiently clear from her sending several times to desire Fanny would leave Miss Mordaunt's apartment, to which she had flown immediately on learning her situation; but the wealth of worlds could not have bribed Fanny to leave, even for a moment, the bed-side of the unconscious sufferer, whose screams of agony pierced her very heart. The sensibility of Miss Dormer, acute as it was, did not waste itself in tears and lamentations; during three weeks, her's was the only hand that ministered to the wants of Caroline, and all that she had suffered from sorrow and fatigue was forgotten, when the physician pronounced that it was probable Miss Mordaunt would recover.

This was by no means the wish of Caroline herself; she was indeed ill-fitted to endure the stings of adversity, and the severity of her first trial might have bowed even a well disciplined mind. She had

naturally strong affections. The loss of her father, under any circumstances, would have been a dreadful blow to her; but to lose him in a manner so horrible; to see herself in the same moment thrown a wretched outcast upon the world, is it wonderful, that, regardless of the will of Him who rules all things, she impiously demanded death, as the only means by which she could escape from misery!

But death, though often invoked, came not. She was pronounced out of danger, and the physician declared that nothing but quiet, light nourishment, and good nursing was necessary to enable her to recover her strength.

Both the friends wept on hearing this sentence, but from different causes: the tears of Caroline flowed, because she was restored to an existence, which was to her become hateful; those of Fanny were caused by pure unmixed joy, in seeing the friend of her youth restored to her; she forgot all that the poor Caroline had suffered, all that she probably had yet to suffer.

"My Caroline, my own Caroline!" cried she, clasping her hands in thankfulness to Heaven; "you will live: how can I ever be sufficiently thankful that you are spared to me."

"If you really loved me," replied Caroline, in a reproachful accent, "you would pray that I might not be spared. Oh, my father!" continued she, bursting into an agony of tears. "Why, why did we not perish together?"

Fanny wept with her: she had indeed loved Mr. Mordaunt as a father, and she mourned for him with filial affection; but the mind of Caroline was not yet in a state to be comforted by sympathy; the intensity of her grief was in one sense fortunate for her, as it prevented her from being hurt at the unfeeling neglect of those, who in prosperity had professed themselves her friends.

CHAPTER IX.

THOUGH the future destiny of Caroline had no place in her own thoughts, it occupied almost exclusively the mind of Miss Dormer, who, as soon as she found her friend completely out of danger, wrote to Lady Sensitive, requesting her advice respecting Caroline's future plans. As to Miss Sensitive, Fanny was too much hurt at her unfeeling neglect of one, for whom she had professed so extravagant a fondness, to address her on the subject.

From the length of time which elapsed before Fanny received an answer, she augured ill of the success of her application: an answer, however, at last arrived, in which Lady Sensitive, after a thousand professions of sorrow and regret, which evidently meant nothing, declared that her silence had proceeded from a desire to ascertain the truth of the shocking re-

ports which had been circulated respecting Mr. Mordaunt's conduct. She was sorry to add, that nothing could exceed the turpitude of it; and as Caroline was supposed to be in some degree implicated in his guilt, her ladyship added, that she could not, upon that account, afford her either countenance or protection. Neither could she suffer any one to remain in her family who associated with a young person under such circumstances; she therefore inclosed what was due to Fanny, and desired that she would take the first opportunity of sending for her clothes. "Heartless, unprincipled woman!" exclaimed Fanny, as with a mixture of indignation and contempt she cast from her the insulting scrawl. She recollected how often this very woman had, by her flattery and affected fondness, encouraged Caroline to act wrong; how often she had declared Miss Mordaunt was as perfect as any human being could be. "Yet now," thought Fanny, "when she is under circumstances of the most extreme distress; when even the shadow of blame

cannot with justice be attached to her, now to cast her off!"

Fanny's heart swelled with indignation, such as had never found a place in her gentle bosom before; but her mind was too well regulated for ungentle feelings to have long a place in it. "My forlorn Caroline," thought she, "has still a friend." And she cast a glance of hope and confidence towards Heaven.

Miss Mordaunt was now well enough to be removed; but when the moderate charges made by the humane Mrs. Fletcher were paid, the sum remaining in Miss Dormer's purse was so small, that she dreaded the idea of taking apartments, which she saw no means of paying for. Yet, to remain where they were, was impossible; and after much hesitation, she determined to acknowledge her actual situation to Mrs. Fletcher, and to ask her advice.

"You shall go, if you please, ma'am," cried the warm-hearted landlady, "to my sister's house at Brompton. She lets

lodgings; and I am certain hers will suit you; and as to the terms, I am sure that you can't have an apartment more reasonable any where. Keep a good heart, Miss," continued Mrs. Fletcher, perceiving the tears steal down Fanny's cheeks, "Miss Mordaunt will soon be quite well; and then, please Heaven, all will go right."

Poor Fanny endeavoured to think so; but she recollected with a sigh, how little Caroline was fitted to struggle with the world, and how unequal she herself was to the task of providing for both. She checked these thoughts, which she feared bordered upon a distrust of Providence, and went directly to Mrs. Linsell's, the sister of Mrs. Fletcher, to agree about the apartments.

She engaged two neat but very small rooms, at a moderate rent, and by the following day, Miss Mordaunt and herself were settled in their new habitation.

No sooner was Caroline able to think of any thing, than she recollected that the Sensitives had not been near her. "Can

it be possible," said she to Fanny, "that they are unacquainted with what has happened?" Fanny did not reply; but her countenance proved sufficiently that they were not unacquainted with it.

"And Celina," said Caroline after a pause, "Celina, who has so often declared that she loved me more fondly than any one else on earth, is it possible that Celina has abandoned me?"

"My dear Caroline!" said Fanny, in a soothing tone.

"Do not call me so; I ought not to be dear to you; I do not deserve the friendship you have shewn for me. Others have left me to perish, would to Heaven you had done the same!"

It was in vain that Fanny essayed to bring back her unhappy friend to reason and to peace. The ingratitude of her favourite Celina stabbed Caroline to the heart: naturally open and guileless, she never suspected that the incessant attentions of the Sensitives, Celina's especially, sprung from any other than disin-

terested motives. Had Celina been in her situation, she was conscious, that all the powers on earth would not have withheld her a moment from flying to her assistance; yet days and weeks had passed, and Celina still was absent. "Perhaps," thought Caroline, "at the very moment in which I hovered on the brink of the grave, she was immersed in gaiety, and I might have breathed my last sigh unheeded and unlamented by her, who professed for me more than sisterly affection."

Bitter tears flowed from the eyes of Caroline as she made these reflections; but they were not the salutary tears which relieve an overcharged heart; her sensibility and her pride were alike wounded by the behaviour of Celina, and she stopped not to enquire how far she was herself to blame, for selecting such a girl as her bosom friend.

The packet which the robbers threw back into the carriage, had been secured by Mrs. Fletcher. It was addressed to Caro-

line, but it was long ere the affectionate Fanny ventured to suffer her to peruse it. As it contains a recapitulation of the events which led the unhappy Mordaunt to commit the crime, eventually so fatal to himself, we shall present it to the reader here.

CHAPTER X.

"SHOULD my worst fears be verified, and the affluence which I have stained my conscience to gain, be wrested from me, it will not give me so deep a pang as the thought that you, my daughter, will be taught to regard me with horror.

"I shall not endeavour to extenuate my guilt. I shall simply relate to you those events in my life to which you are a stranger: by so doing, I shall put it in your power to judge of the enormity of my crime. I know, I feel, that it was a crime; yet, Caroline, you should remember, that it had its source in the most passionate attachment to your mother, in the most doating fondness for you.

"I became an orphan while I was yet an infant. My father, who was an officer in the army, lost his life in battle, and my mother survived the news of his death only two months.

"The death of my parents procured me, what I should never otherwise have enjoyed, the protection of my grandfather. My father married against his inclination, an action which he had declared he never would forgive; nor could all the intreaties of his son prevail upon him to pardon, what he himself acknowledged, was the first fault the young man had ever committed. Nature, however, pleaded for the orphan boy of his once beloved son; and pride whispered that he was the sole remaining branch of his family. Mr. Mordaunt was not deaf to their suggestions; and in one week after the funeral of my mother I was removed to his house.

"Though I was not at that period more than three years old, I still remember the mingled feelings of surprize and dread, with which the first sight of my grandfather inspired me. He was a tall, stately figure, whose austere looks, and cold reserved manners, effectually forbade any approaches to confidence or familiarity. In his opinion, it was impossible to treat children with too much rigour; and he

always ascribed my father's imprudent match to his having, as he grew towards manhood, treated him with a degree of indulgence: you may judge from this circumstance how little he was likely to shew me any.

"Alas! how frequently do we mistake the reverse of wrong for right. I had, when a child, very delicate health, and the needless severity with which I was treated, certainly hurt my constitution. The remembrance of what I myself suffered, rendered me indulgent to you, Caroline, in your childish days, even to a blameable degree; and when I saw and felt the necessity there was to check those propensities, which my ill-judged indulgence had fostered, till their effects threatened your happiness, I wanted firmness to do so. Bitterly, and frequently do I regret that weakness, the fatal effects of which I cannot disguise from myself.

"Mr. Mordaunt did not chuse that I should go to a public school, and he provided for me a private tutor, a man of learning and probity, but of a disposition

too similar to his own for my happiness. When I was about sixteen, Mr. Mordaunt became the guardian of a youth of the name of Pembroke, who was distantly related to the Mordaunt family. The young man was then at college; but the following Christmas he accepted Mr. Mordaunt's invitation to spend the holidays at his house.

"As I had never been accustomed to the society of young men of my own age; for, in fact, I never had a young associate, except poor Dormer, whom I had at that time lost, I looked forward with pleasure to the arrival of Reginald Pembroke. I was prepossessed in his favour at the first glance; but I had very soon the mortification to find, that my grandfather's opinion of him was the reverse of mine.

"In a few days after the arrival of Mr. Pembroke, I was summoned into my grandfather's library, a place which I never entered with pleasure, for I never recollected being desired to do so, but for the purpose of receiving a severe lecture. The unusual austerity of Mr. Mordaunt's

countenance convinced me, the moment I saw him, that I had in some way or other incurred his displeasure; but I was thunderstruck, when he told me he had sent for me, to strictly prohibit me from indulging the partiality, which he saw I felt for Reginald Pembroke.

"In general, his commands were received with a bow of acquiescence; but on the present occasion, I felt that acquiescence was impossible, and I remained silent and motionless, while he added in a still more severe tone, "do you not comprehend me, Sir?"

"I will avoid the society of Mr. Pembroke, Sir," replied I, certainly, "if it is your wish that I should do so; but without he conducted himself so as to destroy my present good opinion of him, I cannot cease to like him."

"My grandfather looked at me with astonishment: it was the first time I had ever presumed to question his commands; and for some moments, surprise and indignation actually deprived him of speech.

"So then," said he at last, "your opinions, Mr. Henry Mordaunt," laying a

marked and disdainful emphasis on the word *opinions*, " are no longer to be regulated by those of a parent, whose age and experience might be supposed to render him your best guide. I tell you, Sir, that this young man is one, with whom I do not chuse you should be intimate; nay, I will go farther, I do not chuse you should on any account or at any time be more than distantly civil to him; and while he is here, it is my determination that you should be as little together as possible. I do not act without reason, Mr. Henry Mordaunt, though I do not chuse to give my reasons to a boy, who is yet incapable of judging them properly: as to your good or ill opinion of Reginald Pembroke, as long as you avoid him, that is of no consequence to me; but at your years, and in your situation, you ought not to presume to form an opinion."

" Never had my grandfather erred so widely as in this instance. Had he condescended to explain to me what was really the fact, that he had good reasons for

believing, that a disposition, radically bad, was concealed under the careless gaiety of Reginald Pembroke's manners, I should have been grateful for his confidence; and if I was not convinced, I should at least have strove to be obedient; but my whole heart revolted against what I considered his tyranny to me, and his injustice towards Reginald.

"Pembroke had seemed pleased, and flattered by the eagerness with which I met his advances; he knew not, at first, to what cause to attribute the change in my manners; but the increasing coldness of my grandfather towards him soon explained it. He did not, however, appear to perceive it, but continued to behave exactly in his usual manner, and my warm admiration of him was somewhat lessened by what I considered a want either of feeling or spirit.

"From that time Reginald Pembroke never visited us, and in two years afterwards he became of age. It seemed as if he had only waited to become his own master to justify my grandfather's dislike to him:—for he plunged into every species

of dissipation; and it was generally thought that his profligate habits would speedily ruin both his health and fortune.

" Mr. Mordaunt asked me more than once, in the most sarcastic manner, whether I saw any reason to change my opinion of Mr. Pembroke; and I saw clearly that he had not forgotten nor forgiven my having presumed, once in my life, to have put my judgment in competition with his.

" I was nearly twenty, and much more sedate than young men of that age usually are, owing, probably, to the austerity with which I had always been treated. My education had been for some time finished, when one morning, my grandfather informed me unexpectedly, that he had received an invitation to pass some weeks at Neville Park, and that I was to accompany him.

" I was equally surprised and delighted to think of emerging, at last, from the solitude in which I had always lived, for Mr. Mordaunt kept very little company. I anticipated, with rapture, the amusements in which I expected to participate at

Neville Park; and though my pleasure was a little checked by the recollection of my own want of polish, I set out on my journey in higher spirits than I had ever felt in my life before. Little, alas! did I foresee the misfortunes, with which my own folly, and the treachery of a false friend was about to overwhelm me."

CHAPTER XI.

"TRAVELLING seemed to have a happy effect upon the spirits of my grandfather, who was more cheerful and communicative than I had ever seen him. We were received by Sir George Neville, of whom I had some personal knowledge, with the greatest cordiality. I had not seen the Baronet for the last two years, and I was rather abashed by the earnest scrutiny with which he surveyed me.

"It is time, my dear Mr. Mordaunt," cried he, "to introduce my young friend here into the world; and I flatter myself, he has now an opportunity of seeing something of it, without danger: our party is large, and I am sure they are, with a single exception, people of whom you must approve."

"I have no doubt of it," replied my grandfather; "but who is the person of whom you make an exception?"

"Reginald Pembroke," said Sir George.

"I am sorry for it," cried Mr. Mordaunt gravely; "for I must own, he is a young man of whom I entertain the worst opinion."

"It is but a short time since my own sentiments were similar," said Sir George; "and even now, although I tolerate, I cannot entirely approve of him; yet I think he has good, nay great qualities; and I hope yet to see him retrieve his character with the wise and the good."

"There is very little chance, I think, of your hope being realized," said my grandfather drily. "But pray, how does it happen that he is here?"

"Sir George Neville gave an unanswerable reason for Pembroke's having been invited; he had, at the risk of his own life, rescued the Baronet's eldest son from drowning, a short time before. The grateful youth, without waiting for permission, brought his preserver with him to the house of his father; and the fascination of Pembroke's manners, the apparent since-

rity with which he lamented his former follies, and the resolution he expressed to abjure them for ever, soon secured to him the good wishes of Sir George and his lady.

" And Emma," said my grandfather in a tone which I could not comprehend.

" Emma regards him as the preserver of her brother," replied Sir George. A significant look passed between the gentlemen, but no more was said upon the subject.

" I was delighted with Lady Neville, whose manners were extremely engaging, and who treated me with a degree of affectionate attention, which made a deep impression upon my mind; nor is it to be wondered at, since it was the first time I had been honoured with the attentions of an accomplished woman.

" Emma Neville's person and manners were pleasing; but although her father introduced me to her in the most flattering manner, there was a coldness in her deportment towards me, which my awkward reserve prevented my trying to conquer.

I felt, indeed, even more inconvenience than I had anticipated from my *mauvaise honte*, but I comforted myself with the hope, that in a little time it would wear off.

"I was dazzled at the polished elegance of Pembroke's manner, and secretly delighted to find that he was much pleased at our meeting. The morning after our arrival at Neville Park, I received a caution from my grandfather about Neville. "You are now, Henry," said he, "of an age to hear and understand reason. The gratitude of my friends, the Nevilles, blinds them, in a great degree, to the faults of Pembroke. I had strong reasons, while he was my ward, to fear that he was thoroughly depraved; it is however possible, although, I think it is but just possible, that I may be mistaken: if I am, I shall readily acknowledge it; but till I am convinced I have been so, I insist upon your being on no other terms with Pembroke than those of cold civility."

"Mr. Mordaunt was not aware, that to be on terms of cold civility with Pembroke

was scarcely possible. I was sauntering in the park a few days afterwards alone, and I met Pembroke so directly, that it was impossible for me to retreat.

" He put his arm within mine with all the easy familiarity of an old acquaintance. " This is fortunate," cried he, " for me, I mean ; for I actually longed for a little uninterrupted conversation with you, as much as a boarding-school girl does for a private interview with her first lover; but I must begin by catechising you in proper form. First, then, your grandfather has commanded you to dislike me."

" I felt my pride roused by the word commanded; and I coldly asked what reason he had for thinking so.

" A great many reasons. I am conscious that he has detested me ever since that little affair of the milliner; you know what I mean."

" I replied I did not.

" Really !" said he, in a tone of surprise

"is it possible that he has not communicated it to you?"

"I assured him that he had not.

"Well," cried he, "that is generous, however, of the old gentleman; but since he has not, I must. A short time before I went to pass the vacation at Mr. Mordaunt's, chance threw me into the company of a young woman in a very humble sphere. I was then a mere boy, she was lovely, and artful as lovely. I protest to you, my dear Henry, that I never entertained a thought of seducing her; but by an unfortunate series of opportunities, which I had not the fortitude to resist, I was entangled in a connection, which came to the ears of your grandfather, in a way very different to the truth.

"At the time he was informed of it, I had some reason to believe that the unhappy girl was pregnant; and even had that not been the case, I should have considered it unmanly, in the highest degree, not to have taken every thing upon myself. I therefore did not attempt to ex-

culpate myself. I saw that your grandfather set me down for an unprincipled profligate, and I am convinced that he impressed you with the same opinion of me."

"He certainly prohibited me from forming an intimacy with you," replied I; "but he never acquainted me with his reasons."

"Well," said Pembroke, "I do not say that he acted altogether without reason; but yet, I must observe in my own defence, that he formed a too hasty judgment, and one which a candid man ought not to have done, of my character: it is certainly unfair to decide peremptorily upon the future conduct of a man from his commission of a boyish error. But I beg your pardon, Henry, I ought not to say this to you. As to my subsequent errors, all that I can say in extenuation of them, is, that entering, as I did into life, without relations or friends, who were interested enough for me to trouble themselves about my conduct, I rushed eagerly into the vortex of dissipation; and from one step I was led on to another, till I

became, what I ought to be ashamed of. I do, from my soul," continued he with energy, "regret the time and money I have devoted to unworthy purposes; and if Heaven spares me, I will yet convince your grandfather, that when he set me down for a confirmed profligate, he did me injustice."

CHAPTER XII.

"It was impossible for me to doubt the sincerity of Pembroke; and I should directly have acquainted Mr. Mordaunt with what passed between us, but that I knew him too tenacious of his opinions, to acknowledge that he had been in the wrong; and I feared the only effect which such a communication would have, would be to render him still more strict in interdicting all intimacy between me and Pembroke. I was, indeed, determined not to seek occasions of being with the latter, but I could not prevail upon myself to shun him; and indeed, had I been so inclined, it would not have been an easy matter; for Frank Neville, the young man whose life Pembroke had saved, was extremely attentive to me, and not less so to him; so that in the parties which were perpetually made by the juniors of the fa-

mily, we were of course both included; and in a short time my grandfather's prohibition was either forgotten or disregarded.

"Dearly did I expiate this, my first fault; but I will not anticipate. Pembroke said to me one morning, "have you a mind, Henry, to see an animated Venus of Medicis? Because, if you have, accompany me in my ride, and I will introduce you to one."

"I consented, merely from boyish curiosity; and after a ride, much longer than usual, we arrived at a neat small house, where we were received by a lady far advanced in years, but still eminently beautiful.

"My dear Madam," cried Pembroke, approaching her respectfully, "I have the pleasure to present to you Mr. Henry Mordaunt, the son of Captain Sutton's dearest friend."

"She received me most graciously, observing with much emotion, that I was my father's perfect image. "Would to Heaven!" continued she, "that my dear

Mr. Sutton had lived to see this day! How would he have rejoiced to see the child of his earliest and dearest friend."

"Kept as I was in ignorance of all that related to my father, I had never even heard the name of Captain Sutton; but I soon found that they had been friends from childhood. They both, at nearly the same time, fell in love with the lady whom my father afterwards married; but her preference of him caused no alteration in their friendship. Captain Sutton, indeed, upon the marriage of my parents, absented himself from their society for some months; but he never ceased to feel the most affectionate regard for both. He was married at the time of my father's death, and to the friendship of himself and his amiable wife, my mother was indebted, during the short remainder of her life, for the tenderest and most unremitting attention.

"These particulars I learned from Pembroke as we were returning home; and they would have been sufficient to induce me to repeat my visit, even if a strong, and to myself, an unknown attraction had

not drawn me once again to the dwelling of Mrs. Sutton.

"This was her lovely daughter, the Medicean Venus, whom Pembroke had promised to introduce me to. Clara Sutton was then about nineteen; her personal charms merited even the high eulogium which Pembroke had bestowed upon them; but faultless as was her lovely form, it equalled not the perfection of her mind. Clara received me in a manner, which shewed how highly she had been taught to estimate my father; she said very little, but that little appeared to me fraught with intelligence; and nearly two hours passed, before the repeated observations of Pembroke, that we should be scarcely at home by dinner time, induced me to wish the ladies good morning.

"Equally pleased and astonished at seeing myself, for the first time, a person of visible consequence to others, I talked all the way home of Mrs. Sutton and her daughter. When Pembroke had related to me the particulars of my father's intimacy with them, he paused; and after re-

maining some time lost in thought, he said suddenly, "I begin to believe I have done a very imprudent thing."

"An imprudent thing," repeated I, "my dear Pembroke; what do you mean?"

"Why, without considering any thing but the pleasure it would give Mrs. Sutton to see you, I have thoughtlessly introduced you to her, forgetting, that in all probability, your grandfather, who certainly cannot bear any one who loved your mother, would object to my doing so."

"Never had my grandfather appeared to me so tyrannical as at that moment. "There is one way," continued Pembroke, "to prevent any ill consequence from our morning's excursion; and that is not to mention it. Mr. Mordaunt will not question you, and you are not obliged to make him your confidant."

"I had never in my life concealed any thing from my grandfather, and I felt the greatest reluctance now to do it; but the sophistry of Pembroke at length prevailed upon me, and from that day, my visits to the house of Mrs. Sutton were frequent.

"We had now been some weeks the inmates of Sir George Neville, and my grandfather, who had charged me to cultivate sedulously the good graces of Miss Neville, though without assigning any particular reason why I was to do so, said to me one day abruptly, "Have you not forgotten, Henry, my injunction to be particularly attentive to Miss Neville?"

"I coloured with the consciousness that I had scarcely thought of Miss Neville from the time of my arrival.

"You are silent, Henry," continued my grandfather, with more mildness than usual. "I see then I am not mistaken; but it is not yet too late to repair your fault. You know that Sir George Neville and myself are old friends; but you do not know that we have long formed a design of uniting our family more closely, by the marriage of Miss Neville and yourself."

"Stunned at intelligence so unexpected and unwelcome, I did not dare to venture a reply, and Mr. Mordaunt continued: "you have been always a favourite with Sir George, and Lady Neville I can see is

highly prepossessed in your favour: the sentiments of Miss Neville will of course be those of her parents, but you must not give her reason to think that you are not highly sensible of the honour she does you: remember therefore, that from this moment, I expect you will be unremitting in your attentions to her."

"As Mr. Mordaunt concluded his speech, he quitted the room. My eyes were now opened to the nature of my sentiments for Clara Sutton. I knew my grandfather too well to dare avow them to him; and in a state of almost frenzied agitation I sought Pembroke.

"I related to him what had passed. I thought he turned pale, but my own agitation was too great to permit me to observe him minutely; but when I proceeded to speak of Clara Sutton, and of the despair which I felt of ever obtaining her, he suddenly interrupted me.

"I see how it is," cried he, "too clearly. Your happiness will be immolated at the shrine of avarice and ambition, as that of your father would have been, had he not

exerted the spirit of a man, and carved his own destiny."

"Ah, Pembroke," said I, "his destiny was a wretched one. His disobedience to a father whom he loved as well as respected, embittered all his future days."

"So your grandfather says, I suppose," replied Pembroke sarcastically; "but I am not inclined to place implicit faith in his assertion. Poverty, at least comparative poverty, might, and perhaps did cause your father some pangs; but I cannot believe that he suffered half so many as a sensible and feeling mind like his would have endured in a loveless, joyless union."

"I shuddered as I thought that such a destiny most probably awaited me, for I was not coxcomb enough to hope that Clara's heart was interested in my favour; and even if it had been, what alas! had a poor dependant like myself to offer?

CHAPTER XIII.

"I MADE an effort, though a feeble one I own, to comply with the wishes of my grandfather. I refrained for a few days from visiting at Mrs. Sutton's; and I strove to treat Miss Neville with particular attention, but her reserve to me became every day more frigid; and I was soon convinced from her manner, that the projected union was not more agreeable to her than to myself.

"Unable wholly to deny myself the sight of Clara, I went to Mrs. Sutton's after an absence of some days, which had to me appeared ages. I was told she was not at home, but Miss Clara was in the parlour. She rose hastily as I entered, and shutting a portfolio which lay open before her, advanced in some confusion to meet me.

"I made, or rather attempted to make some apology for the unusual length of my

absençe, and then tried to converse; but my efforts were ill-seconded by Clara, who seemed uncommonly abstracted, and frequently glanced a look at the portfolio, which made me suspect that something which it contained was the cause.

"In a short time a servant entered to speak to Clara, and I took that opportunity to rise, and with apparent carelessness open the portfolio. Clara's back was to me, so that she did not perceive the action. What was my surprise, my ecstacy at beholding an unfinished portrait of myself: scarcely could I believe my eyes; but the striking resemblance of the portrait to myself, and the evident embarrassment which Clara had shewed on my entrance, put the matter out of doubt. I was just closing the portfolio, when Clara turned round and saw me.

"I cannot relate the scene which followed; suffice it to say, that the barriers of discretiononce broken down, I utterly lòst sight of duty and prudence. I vowed in the most passionate terms to live only for Clara, and never to wed another.

"The weeping girl was too ingenuous to try to conceal her love for me; but all I could obtain was leave to plead my passion for her to her mother. It was in vain that I reminded her of the improbability of Mrs. Sutton's listening to my suit. "My mother is the arbiter of my destiny," cried she; "and from her, I never can, I never will appeal. All that she thinks right to do I know she will to promote our felicity; for believe me Henry you are scarcely less dear to her than I am myself."

"What, alas!" cried I passionately, "have I to expect, but an immediate refusal? Mrs. Sutton will not, cannot think of giving you to a beggar."

"Would to Heaven!" said Clara, "that was the only obstacle: No, if she should command our separation, I am convinced it will be from other, and far different motives."

"Clara was right. Mrs. Sutton lamented her own imprudence in allowing an intimacy between her daughter and myself; but she declared that nothing should tempt her to permit me to continue it. The

imprudence which she lamented was in fact extenuated, by her having been led to believe that I was passionately attached to Miss Neville, a fact which she informed me Pembroke had assured her of.

"Nothing could equal my surprize at this circumstance. I had indeed observed to Pembroke, when he questioned me about Miss Neville, that I thought her handsome, and she appeared very amiable; but I could not remember a word that sounded like the language of passion.

"When I questioned Pembroke on the cause of his asserting it, he declared that he had actually believed from the timidity which I shewed in approaching Miss Neville, that I was enamoured of her; and when he discovered his mistake, he did not like to acknowledge his want of penetration to Mrs. Sutton, not foreseeing any ill-effects that could arise from what he had said remaining uncontradicted.

"A man of the world would at once have divined some sinister motive for conduct so strange and even childish; but I was naturally unsuspecting; and I enter-

tained besides too high an opinion of Pembroke, to suppose it possible that he would try to involve me in the miseries of a hopeless passion. It was impossible, indeed, to suppose that he could have any motive for wishing to do so; and while I regretted, bitterly regretted, that I had ever seen the too lovely Clara, I wholly acquitted him of all blame in the business.

"Let me hasten over the events which succeeded. Not daring to speak to my grandfather on the subject of my passion, I wrote to him that it was impossible for me to obey his commands in marrying Miss Neville, as my heart was no longer in my own possession. I added, however, that if he would allow me to remain single, I would pledge myself in any way he pleased, never to marry without his permission. I will not attempt to describe to you the rage of Mr. Mordaunt, who loaded me with reproaches and threats of casting me off for ever, if I persisted in my contumelious disobedience. He had the inhumanity to insult the ashes of my parents, by reflections, which cancelled,

as I thought, all my obligations to him; and when he concluded by menacing me with a fate similar to that of my father, I calmly replied, that I would prefer any fate to a continued dependence on the reviler of my parents.

"At these words he sprang forward, and in the madness of his rage aimed a blow at me, which I evaded, and quitted the room. I retired to my chamber, but I had not been many minutes in it, when I received from Mr. Mordaunt the following billet.

"If I have still a grandson, he must instantly solicit from Miss Neville permission to lead her within a fortnight to the altar. When that permission has been obtained, I shall endeavour to forget the insolence and ingratitude with which I have just been treated."

"I snatched up a pen and wrote instantly the following answer.

"If my pardon can be gained on no other condition, I must despair of ever obtaining it. I never will, I never can, solicit the hand of Miss Neville; for death would, in

my opinion, be a thousand times preferable to a union with her."

"I received in reply a few lines from my grandfather, written in a hand which passion had rendered nearly illegible, commanding me instantly to quit the house of Sir George Neville; but not to presume to return to his, for he renounced me for ever.

"A cold chill ran through my veins while I perused, what I regarded as a sentence of eternal banishment from the only relative I had on earth. While I stood gazing on it in hopeless despondence, Pembroke entered the room. I handed him the letter, for I had no voice to tell him its contents.

"He read it twice, and then said coolly, "this letter, which you doubtless regard as the death-stroke of your happiness, may, by skilful management, be converted into a means of procuring you permanent felicity."

"Impossible!" cried I.

"Not at all;" said Pembroke. "I am very certain that Mrs. Sutton will never consent to your marriage with her daughter

as long as she believes, that by remaining single, you have a chance of being restored to your grandfather's favour; but I am much mistaken if she persists in refusing you Clara's hand, when she finds that you are actually renounced by the old gentleman."

"But even if Mrs. Sutton should prove so nobly disinterested, ought I to accept it?" cried I.

"Then marry Miss Neville," said Pembroke.

"Oh impossible!" exclaimed I vehemently.

"My dear Henry," cried Pembroke affectionately; "I do not see that honour can compel you to resign happiness in whatever shape she may present herself to you, and yet that seems apparently to be your plan. I neither wonder at, nor condemn your resolution to give up your grandfather's property, sooner than bestow your hand on a woman you cannot love; but I do not see any reason why, if the mother of Clara Sutton is disposed to bestow her daughter and a competence

upon you, you should sacrifice to a mistaken sense of honour, both your own happiness and that of the woman you love. It is possible that you may never be put to the trial, but if you should, take my advice, and make Clara and yourself happy."

"When Pembroke spoke he more than suspected that such a trial awaited me, and he was not mistaken. I quitted the house of Sir George Neville that very day; but unable to tear myself far from the spot which Clara inhabited, I took up my abode at a farmer's, a few miles distance from her mother's."

CHAPTER XIV.

"SUFFICE it to say, my dear Caroline, that I made every effort without success to soften my grandfather's severity. To a number of letters which I addressed to him, I received only one answer. In it he informed me that he had put it out of his own power to accord me his forgiveness, even if I were disposed to obtain it on his own terms. He renounced me, solemnly and for ever renounced me; and the only effect of my continued applications would be to draw from him fresh maledictions.

"I shuddered as I read his letter; and the next day I prepared to leave my obscure retreat and hasten to the metropolis. It was indeed high time for me to think of some means of gaining a livelihood; for the small stock of money which I had

when I left Sir George Neville's was nearly exhausted.

"I revolved a thousand plans in my mind, but each appeared to me more hopeless than the other. I was however prevented from trying any of them by Mrs. Sutton.

"From the time of my leaving Sir George Neville's, she had not lost sight of me, and she now appointed a meeting at the house of a relation of her's. A short time had produced a great alteration for the worse in my appearance, and as Mrs. Sutton gazed upon me, her soft eyes filled with tears.

"I could not prevail upon her wholly to give up the hope that I might yet obtain my grandfather's forgiveness. "At all events," said she, "you must be careful not to irritate him by any act of open defiance to his will. If twelve months hence he still continues inexorable, I promise you that Clara shall be yours. In the mean time you must consider me as a mother, and accept from me without scruple, such an allowance as I could afford to make my son."

"Though ignorant by what means I could obtain a shilling, I peremptorily refused Mrs. Sutton's generous offer of pecuniary assistance. She enquired into my plans. I confessed that I had none; and finding me resolute in my rejection of pecuniary aid, she offered me a letter of recommendation to a merchant in London; and after repeated charges to be careful of my health, we parted.

"I found the merchant, Mr. Dormer, a liberal and gentlemanly man. He took me immediately into his counting-house, and I was surprised to find the salary he offered me much larger than I had any idea I should receive. Accident discovered to me some years afterwards, that I was indebted for the greatest part of it to the kindness of the amiable Mrs. Sutton, who, desirous at once to assist me, and to spare my pride, had settled with Mr. Dormer, that he should pay me a certain sum over and above what I earned.

"At the twelve months end, I renewed my application for forgiveness, but it was treated as before with contempt. Mrs.

Sutton came to London immediately on hearing the result of it. "You must write once more, my dear Henry," cried she; "I also will write; and if we should find your grandfather inexorable, you must console yourself with the reflection that you have two friends whom nothing will ever estrange from you."

"Mrs. Sutton did not shew me the letter which she wrote to my grandfather, nor the answer, for he condescended to answer hers, though he took no notice of mine; but she came to me as soon as she received it, and extending her hand to me with an air of maternal tenderness: "come, my son," cried she, "let us hasten to a home where love, peace, and competence, I trust, awaits you."

"My heart was too full to reply, but she understood my silence. We left London that very day, and within a fortnight I was the happy husband of Clara Sutton.

"Happy did I say? No, I retract the word. I might have been, indeed, the happiest of the happy, had not the thought of my

grandfather's malediction had been a perpetual thorn to my heart.

"For obvious reasons I concealed from my wife and her worthy mother this constant source of inquietude. I have omitted to say that soon after the rupture between my grandfather and myself, Pembroke married Miss Neville. I was astonished when I saw his marriage announced in the papers, for he had never given me the most remote hint of his passion for her. I wrote him a letter of congratulation, but I received an answer so short and cold that I suffered the correspondence to drop; and it was some years before I again heard of him.

"Nearly seven years elapsed, my dear Caroline, from my marriage till the time of your birth. You were received with rapture by your parents, and your amiable grandmother often declared that your birth seemed to have renewed the summer of her days.

"Little, alas! did she foresee that a misfortune was at that moment impending

over us, to which our happiness and her existence was to fall a sacrifice.

"I have mentioned to you a merchant of the name of Dormer. This gentleman was Mrs. Sutton's confidential friend and adviser in all money matters. Captain Sutton had sold out of the army a considerable time before his death; he possessed a moderate fortune, besides the sum he gained by his commission. He had vested all his money in the funds, and by his will, he divided it equally between his widow and daughter.

"At the time of my marriage, Mrs. Sutton asked me whether I chose to sell out Clara's portion, and place the money out in any other way; but being wholly ignorant of business, I begged of her to do with it as she thought proper; and she decided in leaving it in the funds.

Mrs. Sutton had frequently been a considerable gainer by taking Mr. Dormer's advice, and changing her money from one stock to another. He called upon her one day when you were about nine months old, and told her that he had just received in-

telligence, [redacted]own, [redacted]uld [redacted]use the funds [redacted] fall very low indeed; that he had taken advantage of it to sell out a considerable sum, which he had in them, and that he would advise her to do the same.

"Mrs. Sutton, without hesitation, empowered him to transact the business for her, requesting him at the same time to place the money at a banking house in the city, till there was an opportunity of vesting it again in the funds.

"We then resided at Brompton, for Mrs. Sutton had quitted the country on my marriage. I was absent from home at the time of Mr. Dormer's visit, but I returned to dinner, and just as we were sitting down to table, Mrs. Sutton received a letter from him, informing her that he had sold her stock, and placed the money according to her order.

"Three days afterwards, I saw in one of the morning papers an account of his having absconded with a considerable sum of money. Mrs. Sutton was at first incredulous, but she was soon too fatally

con[redacted]
The villain [redacted]
of her property, and the furniture of our house and a little plate, was all that we possessed on earth.

" This blow broke your grandmother's heart, and laid the foundation of that lingering disease, which afterwards deprived me of your mother.

" Oh, Caroline ! think what I felt when I beheld my beloved, my respected mother, for as such as I considered Mrs. Sutton, sinking under the penury which her misplaced confidence had brought upon us ; but when I traced in the wan cheek and the hollow-eye of my adored Clara, that she would not long survive her parent, I sank into bitter and hopeless despair. I believed that the moment was arrrived in which my grandfather's malediction was about to be fulfilled; and without making an effort to avert them, I resigned myself to the horrors of my fate."

CHAPTER XV.

"UNKNOWN to me Clara, determined upon making a last effort to gain Mr. Mordaunt's forgiveness. She told me that some business would detain her a few days from home, and she set out for his seat in Devonshire, although she was then so weak and emaciated, that her life had nearly fallen a sacrifice to the journey.

"She readily gained admittance to his presence; but although he was evidently moved by her tears and entreaties, he avowed his resolution never to forgive me.

"It is not my forgiveness," cried he with a bitter smile, that he requires, "it is my money; but he may recollect that it is mine to bestow as I please, and never shall it become the reward of disobedience."

"My poor Clara assured him that his

forgivene[illegible] even [illegible]naccompanied by a single guinea, [illegible] a load of anguish from [illegible] but she [illegible] in vain, he continued inexorable, and she returned to me almost heart-broken.

"We quitted our house, and converted our furniture and plate into money; but the sum which they produced was too small to be employed in any way likely to procure us a permanent support. I made repeated but unsuccessful attempts to get employment in a merchant's counting-house. Every day diminished our small stock of money; and I saw with horror that want began to menace us with its approach. One morning as I was going out, I saw a gentleman drop down apparently in a fit, at a few paces distance from my own door. I hastened to his assistance, but I started with horror when I recognised, convulsed as they were with pain, the features of my grandfather.

"Some passengers assisted me to raise and carry him into my apartment, and one of them humanely ran for a surgeon. I ought to have spared my Clara, the

dreadful shock which the sight of Mr. Mordaunt occasioned her, but at that moment I thought only of him. My wife's presence of mind, however, did not desert her; though pale and trembling, she exerted herself to do all that was necessary. In a few minutes a surgeon arrived, he bled my grandfather; but assured me at the same time, that a few hours would probably terminate his existence.

"Never shall I forget the anguish I felt, when I heard this dreadful sentence. "He will die!" exclaimed I franticly. "He will die! without revoking the dreadful malediction which hangs over me and mine."

"Thank Heaven, that misfortune at least was spared me! He recovered his senses, and though he spoke imperfectly, I had the happiness to receive his forgiveness.

"He made me understand that he wished an attorney of the name of Blachford to be sent for. This man lived at a considerable distance; and Mr. Mordaunt appeared excessively anxious for his arrival; his excessive anxiety probably hastened his

death, for it took place a few minutes before Mr. Blachford reached my lodgings.

"It is impossible for me to detail what followed. I can only say that Mr. Blachford shewed me a will, by which my grandfather bequeathed to Mrs. Pembroke and her heirs, the whole of his property. Blachford avowed his belief, and it was mine also, that Mr. Mordaunt's anxiety for his arrival, and the expressions, "Heaven send that he may be in time!" which he had frequenty repeated, arose from his desire to have this will destroyed; and he offered me, provided I would insure him an ample reward, to commit it to the flames.

"I shall not repeat to you, Caroline, the sophistry by which I prevailed upon myself to believe that I was fulfilling the wishes of the deceased in agreeing to this villainous proposal. Suffice it to say, that I did agree, fatally agree; for from that moment to the present, I have not enjoyed a day of uninterrupted peace.

"As my grandfather was supposed to die intestate, I succeeded as heir at law;

and now for the first time Reginald Pembroke shewed himself to me in his true colours. He abused my deceased grandfather in the most gross terms, declared he was convinced a will had been made in his favour, which the old dotard, so he styled Mr. Mordaunt, had had the weakness to destroy; being wheedled, as he supposed, into doing so, by my hypocritical cant of sorrow and repentance.

"It was in some degree a relief to my conscience to find that he conducted himself in a manner so different to what I had expected. It was now clear to me, that he had formed, long before my marriage, a plan to ruin me with my grandfather; and my angelic Clara, who was ignorant of the villainous fraud I had practised, wrung my heart a thousand times by repeating, "that the justice of Heaven had crossed his iniquitous designs."

CHAPTER XVI.

"The first use which I made of my riches, was to try every means that medicine and change of air afforded to restore your mother's declining health: all, however, proved ineffectual. I bless Heaven now that they did so; had it been otherwise; had she been spared till now; had she witnessed the ignominy which has fallen upon her wretched husband, the undeserved disgrace which has overwhelmed her innocent child, her heart must have been broken, and bitter indeed would have been her passage to the grave.

"For some time after the death of your mother, I was a prey to grief which nothing could alleviate; even your smiles, my Caroline, served only to increase my sorrow, by reminding me of her; and I peremptorily ordered that you should not come into my sight.

But when time had moderated the excess of my grief, I found in that resemblance, which had at first torn my heart with anguish, the sweetest consolation. As you grew up, you continued to resemble your mother most strongly in person, and perhaps the resemblance would have extended still farther, but for my ill-timed and injudicious indulgence.

" During the life-time of Blachford, I continued in peaceable possession of Mr. Mordaunt's property, nor had I any reason to believe, that my title to it would ever be disputed. Blachford had a son, and you doubtless remember a young man of that name, whom you saw at my house, I believe twice. This man, vulgar in manners, uneducated, and of the worst character, saw and loved you, my dear Caroline. He had the insolence to propose for you; and when his proposal was indignantly rejected, he sneeringly told me, that he supposed I was ignorant that he was in possession of a secret by which he could directly transform a rich heiress into a portionless girl, whose beauty and

accomplishments might not be sufficient to procure her a wealthy husband.

"I understood the villain, and I shrank appalled from the threat he threw out; but determined not to betray my knowledge of how wholly I was in his power, I haughtily demanded an explanation, which he readily gave me. I discovered with horror that the will I had believed destroyed was in his possession; and he insolently assured me that nothing would induce him to keep such a secret without I gave myself a father-in-law's claim upon his silence.

"After much altercation, I prevailed upon him to promise me to be silent, at least for the present, upon condition of receiving a large sum. It is nearly two years since, and from that time he has been so exorbitant in his demands, that had they been constantly complied with, I must have given up to him a larger sum than my income amounted to.

* * * * * * * *

"He has at length put his threats into effect. I am about to become a miserable out-

cast. Not on my own account do I regret the loss of my grandfather's property; but when I reflect on the wretchedness with which it will overwhelm you, my beloved Caroline, you, who have hitherto been shielded alas! too tenderly shielded! from every thing that could occasion you even trifling uneasiness, my heart swells almost to bursting.

"In the midst of guilt and misfortune, I retain one comfort, a certainty that in Miss Dormer you will have a friend, whom nothing can ever induce to abandon or deceive you. Should I be taken from you, to her I bequeath you; and may Heaven bless her as she fulfils my last injunction, to watch with a sister's love and care over your happiness! Farewell, my Caroline! That Heaven may support you under the evils which I have accumulated on your innocent head, will be the last prayer of your guilty and unhappy father.

HENRY MORDAUNT."

Let us now return to Caroline, whose health began to be nearly restored, and

whose violent sorrow had subsided into a silent or rather a sullen melancholy. She brooded over the recollection of her days of affluence, till the thought of the ingratitude with which her former friends treated her, fostered a general distrust and dislike to all mankind except Fanny, towards whom her love and gratitude were boundless. No expression of thanks or gratitude, however, escaped her, she had too much pride to express her feelings, but her looks eloquently spoke them, when she turned her eyes unobserved as she supposed upon Fanny.

Little, however, did she know or even surmise the extent of her obligations to that amiable girl, who had in fact expended in procuring for her those little delicacies, which her state of health rendered necessary, every shilling that she possessed, or could in any way raise.

It may appear strange, that Caroline, whose sensibility was excessively acute, had not enquired how the funds were provided that supported her. Unfortunately for Caroline she had never been taught to

think for others; she saw and felt most keenly the personal trouble which she gave to her friend; but an idea that it was accompanied with any pecuniary embarrassment never entered her mind, till accident revealed to her what the generous Fanny would have died rather than discovered.

At the time Miss Dormer had taken the apartments, there was a small one on the same floor unoccupied: this had been afterwards taken by a person who dealt in fancy works, and to her Fanny had applied to dispose of some lace. She had tried to do so, but was unsuccessful. She had kept it, however, at the request of Miss Dormer, to whom she promised to take the first opportunity of disposing of it; and as ill-luck would have it, one morning, when Fanny happened to be out, an old lady, who was a great lover of bargains, called upon her, and she shewed the lace immediately, in hopes of getting a customer.

The partition between the rooms was slight. The old lady, whose name was

Brown, happened to be a little deaf; and Mrs. Crosby, in her eagerness to dispose of the lace, forgot the chance of her being overheard, and raised her voice so much, that Caroline, whose attention was roused by the mention of her own name, heard distinctly every word of the following conversation.

"And so, Mrs. Crosby, you say that these people are very much distressed indeed?"

"Oh yes, I am afraid so, Ma'am; for the young lady looked so disappointed when she found that I had not disposed of the lace, and begged of me so earnestly to try and sell it, that I declare my heart ached for her. And then the other poor thing is still but half recovered."

"Why, I don't at all want the lace, but yet as you seem to think them objects of compassion and correct people.....I hope, Mrs. Crosby, you are quite sure they are correct people."

"Certain of it, Ma'am," cried the kind-hearted Mrs. Crosby eagerly. "Indeed I would venture to swear it."

"Oh fie, Mrs. Crosby! don't you know we can never be *quite certain* in these cases; but, however, as you say they *appear* correct sort of people, and as I never could bear to see distress without relieving it, why, I think I shall take the lace. Pray what is it a yard?"

"Fifteen shillings, Ma'am."

"Fifteen shillings!" screamed this benevolent buyer of bargains. "What for old lace! why it scarcely cost more when it was new."

"Indeed, Ma'am, it cost thirty; and you could not purchase lace of this quality at the cheapest shop in London for less than twenty-seven. As to its being old, if you please to examine it, you will see that it has never been washed."

"Oh, you are quite mistaken, Crosby; you don't understand lace, I see; it has been washed a great many times, I'll answer for it. How many yards have you got of it?"

"Twelve, Ma'am."

"That's three yards more than I shall know what to do with. However, I should

not mind taking it at a reasonable price, but really, Crosby, what you ask is exorbitant."

"I am sorry you should think so, Ma'am."

"Oh I am sure you think so too, Crosby; but come, I see how it is, you wish, I suppose, to add a little to your commission! eh?"

"Indeed, Ma'am, you——"

"Don't deny it: these things are all fair in trade. Now I will tell you what I'll do, I'll give you eleven shillings, and that is more than you will be offered by any body else, I am certain."

"I hope not, Ma'am; for I am sure Miss Dormer will never part with it for that." She then laid aside the lace and produced those things which Mrs. Brown had come to purchase; but the old lady's ill success in getting a bargain of the lace, had put her out of humour with every thing else; and after taking up the poor woman's time in the most unconscionable manner, she bought a cheap frill, and departed.

To describe the state of Caroline's mind

during that part of the conversation which related to herself, would be impossible. The reflection that she had reduced her friend to expedients which her pride represented as even more humiliating than they really were, almost distracted her. She took a retrospect of her own conduct to Fanny; it had been in many instances blameable, and her conscience magnified her offences against her friend. Oh! thought she, what a return does she make me! and how base, how ungrateful should I be, were I ever to forget what she has done for me.

When the tumult of her feelings had subsided, she began to compare Fanny's character with her own. The mist which pride and self-love had placed before her eyes was gradually clearing away, and the comparison which she drew between herself and her friend, tended to dissipate it still more. She began to think with less bitterness of those summer friends, whose neglect had given her such severe pangs. But when she thought of the cold and cruel conduct of Lady Sensitive, and

her daughter, her natural haughtiness gained the mastery of those better principles which were rising in her mind, and the mingled dislike and contempt with which she thought of them, proved that she had yet profited little by her first, but severe lessons in the school of adversity.

CHAPTER XVII.

So deeply was Caroline engaged in reflection, that Fanny had entered the room and stood gazing at her for some moments before she perceived her. Starting at length from her reverie, she related the substance of what she had heard, and avowed her resolution to be no longer burthensome to her only friend.

" Don't talk of being burthensome to me, Caroline," said Fanny, " unless you would have me think that your love for me is abated. As to the lace, which I see it hurts you that I should have parted with, recollect, my love, that it is useless to me at present; nevertheless, as I have now a supply of money, which will last us for some time, I will keep it, if you wish me to do so."

" But how," said Caroline anxiously, " did you obtain this money ?"

This was a question Fanny was obliged to evade answering: in fact, she had parted with some trinkets which she particularly valued, because they had been her mother's; and although Caroline did not suspect that the money was obtained by the sale of them, she was certain her friend must have raised it by selling something, and that thought made her doubly anxious to contribute towards their joint maintenance.

But what, alas! could she do? Accustomed all her life to have her wishes gratified as soon as expressed, surrounded by beings whose business, or whose pleasure it was not only to supply her wants, but even to humour her most extravagant fancies; totally unused to the labour of intense application or severe study: in what way could a being so totally helpless gain a subsistence?

These thoughts passed rapidly through the mind of Fanny, as Caroline discussed various plans of gaining a livelihood, either as a private teacher of the lan-

guages, as an embroideress, or by establishing a boarding school.

To the first of these plans Fanny objected that it would subject Caroline to innumerable mortifications; since as she had resolved to change her name, she would be in continual danger of being recognised. "Oh, say no more, dear Fanny!" cried Caroline: "not for the world would I encounter any one who knows my unfortunate story. But I should run no risk of doing so as an embroideress." "I grant you would not," said Fanny; "if you worked for the shops; but, my dearest girl, you have no idea how scanty would be the maintenance which you could derive, even from incessant labour, if you disposed of your work to them."

"Well," cried Caroline impatiently, "suppose we open a school at some distance from London; what objection can you possibly have to our doing so?"

Fanny was a moment silent, but her countenance shewed that there was an ob-

jection, and our readers have probably already guessed it, although Caroline did not.

"Pray speak, Fanny," cried she, "have you any thing to urge against the school?"

"Nothing," replied Fanny hesitatingly, "but our total want of money to carry it on."

This obstacle was conclusive, and a long pause succeeded. At last Caroline exclaimed, "I have thought of one, who will, I am sure, be useful to us; ill as I have sometimes behaved to her, and injudicious as she was in flattering my foibles, yet I am sure she loves me; and I know she has a good heart."

"Do you mean Madame Rocca?" asked Fanny doubtingly.

Caroline replied in the affirmative, and declared that she would write to her the following day. "A personal interview will be better," replied Fanny; "and as you cannot call upon her I will." Miss Mordaunt made no objection to this arrangement, and the next morning Fanny set out for the abode of Madame Rocca,

though without any very sanguine hopes of benefiting by her advice.

The house of Mr. Alderman Guzzlemore was situated in one of the most fashionable squares; and as the day proved rainy, Fanny was obliged to take a hackney-coach, maugré all her reluctance to the expence of coach-hire. It was evident that the sleek and well-fed lacqueys of Mr. Alderman Guzzlemore, had no idea that their civilities were to extend to people who used such a vulgar conveyance; for it was a considerable time before Fanny could get any of them to attend to her repeated enquiries, "whether Madame Rocca was at home?"

At last a pert coxcomb advanced, and said with a familiar air, "I perceive, Mem, you are *hignorant* of the late *appy hevent* in our family. Madame Rocca is *matthewmorphewed* into Mrs. Guzzlemore; but whether she is at home or not I really cannot say."

"I will thank you, Sir, to enquire," said Fanny presenting him with a card.

"I will speak to her valet, Mem," re-

plied the puppy, turning upon his heel; "but I fancy she will scarcely be visible so early."

He was however mistaken. Mrs. Guzzlemore was no stranger to the dreadful reverse of fortune, which her former pupil had experienced, but she was ignorant of the share which Miss Dormer had taken in her troubles. She supposed that Fanny was still with Lady Sensitive, and ascribed her visit to the change of fortune, which had transformed the insignificant Madame Rocca into the wealthy Mrs. Guzzlemore.

Charmed with the idea of exhibiting the splendour by which she was surrounded, she gave orders for Fanny to be instantly admitted, and received her with all the pretty mincing airs of a would-be juvenile bride.

Although Fanny had never felt any particular liking for Madame Rocca, yet the natural goodness of her heart led her to rejoice in her unexpected change of fortune. Had her mind been more at ease, she would have been highly amused at the

affectation of girlish bashfulness, with which Mrs. Guzzlemore talked of her having been prevailed upon, through mere compassion for Mr. Guzzlemore, to bestow her hand upon him.

When she had run through the detail of sufferings which her reluctance to become a bride, had, as she declared, inflicted upon the susceptible Mr. Guzzlemore; for she would not for the world have called him by his civic appellation, she suddenly asked Fanny if she knew what was become of Miss Mordaunt.

The detail which Miss Dormer began of her friend's severe sufferings and dangerous illness, was suddenly interrupted by an affected scream from Mrs. Guzzlemore. "Fidelle, *ma pavre petite*, are you hurt?" cried she snatching up a lap-dog, whose tail she had chanced to touch with her foot.

Surprised and disconcerted, Fanny paused for a moment, and Mrs. Guzzlemore took care she should not collect herself sufficiently to renew the subject. After lamenting very pathetically the ter-

rible misfortune of her *chere* Fidelle, she turned again to Fanny and exclaimed: "so then the poor unfortunate girl is alive, is she? How I pity her! for in her situation it would have been a blessing had she escaped, by death, the knowledge of her father's infamy."

Mild as Fanny was by nature, and strictly as she practised the divine precepts of meekness and forbearance on almost all occasions, the conduct of Mrs. Guzzlemore entirely vanquished her self-command. Rising with an air of dignity, from which the ci-devant governess shrunk, as she would have done in former times, she turned to her with a look of sovereign contempt, and saying, "it ill becomes you, Madam, you, who for so many years were the object of Mr. Mordaunt's bounty, to revile his memory. Shame on the want of principle, of feeling, nay, of common humanity, which can thus lead you to load the fallen! those too, to whom, in their prosperity you were the meanest of sycophants."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Before the incensed and astonished Mrs. Guzzlemore had recovered sufficient presence of mind to reply, Fanny had quitted the apartment and the house. Stung to the heart by the unwomanly conduct of Mrs. Guzzlemore, her excessive agitation prevented her from perceiving that it rained very fast; and she walked on heedless of the heavy drops by which she must soon have been wet through, till she was roused by the question, "will you allow me to offer you part of an umbrella?" and looking up to see who addressed her, she perceived a gentlemanly looking man, apparently between thirty and forty, who was viewing her with a look of respectful interest.

With a face covered with blushes she civilly declined his offer, and perceiving at the same moment that she had taken a

wrong direction, she turned round, in great confusion, to pursue her way home.

There was in the countenance and air of Fanny something so indicative of perfect purity, that the man must have been a hardened libertine indeed, who could insult her. The gentleman, whose notice she had attracted, was of a different character; he observed her agitation and confusion, but he concluded they had their origin in distress of some kind, and he wished to penetrate into the nature of it, not out of curiosity, but from a wish to alleviate it if possible.

The rain soon ceased, but not before the light clothes of Fanny were completely soaked: regardless, however, of that circumstance, she rapidly pursued her way without observing that Mr. Selden, though he kept at a distance from her, took the same direction. At length she reached home, and no sooner did Caroline see her, than she burst into tears.

"Dear Fanny," cried she, as she assisted her to pull off her wet clothes, "I seem fated to be in every way the cause of

evil to you; but for me you would not have risked your health, perhaps your life, as you have done, by braving the inclemency of the weather in such a dreadful day."

Fanny made light of her apprehensions; and then cautiously revealed to her the ill success of her embassy; but she carefully concealed the particulars of her conversation with Mrs. Guzzlemore.

Caroline made no comments on the want of feeling displayed by her *ci-devant* governess; but her eloquent countenance plainly shewed how much it wrung her heart. She repeated to herself, indeed, many times, that she had never treated Madame Rocca as she ought to have done; but she could not help remembering, that although she did not love Madame Rocca, she had always cheerfully drawn her purse-strings whenever she found, that by so doing, she could serve or oblige her; and Madame had taken care that that should be pretty often. She remembered too, that once in a severe fit of illness, she had appointed herself Madame's head nurse, and

her heart sickened at the recollection of the tender epithets with which Madame loaded her on her recovery; the many professions of endless gratitude and boundless love which she had poured forth. "But what right," cried she suddenly to herself, "had I to believe her? Ought I not to have remembered, that pecuniary favours alone can never purchase affection? And as to any other kindness, was it not cancelled by the neglect, nay, even insolence, with which I often treated her?" She sighed. Memory presented to her in their most glaring colours, the many provocations she had given to Fanny, to her only friend; and as she could not help contrasting her conduct with that of Madame Rocca, the comparison drew from her eyes a torrent of tears.

They were not as before, tears of sullen sorrow or disappointed pride: no, they flowed from another and far better source; her eyes were at length completely opened to her own faults. She no longer considered herself as one who had been

"More sinned against than sinning."

She recollected with the deepest contrition, the many hours of uneasiness she had given to her father; to him who doated upon her with even more than parental affection. She retraced the various causes of uneasiness or disgust which she had given to those around her; and throwing herself upon her knees, she sought to lose the insupportable bitterness of her feelings in prayer.

CHAPTER XIX.

It was, perhaps, the first time in her life, that Caroline had ever experienced the efficacy of prayer. Let those who start at this assertion, recollect that till the sad moment which tore her father from her, she had been nursed in the lap of worldly prosperity; and though nominally a Christian, the pleasures or the duties of religion had engrossed little of her time, and less of her thoughts. She was now roused to a sense of the manner in which she had abused the gifts bestowed upon her; but from the natural warmth of her feelings, she was in no small danger of passing from the extreme of carelessness, to that of gloomy superstition.

Luckily for Miss Mordaunt, her friend Fanny was admirably calculated to lead her by gentle steps into the right way. The piety of Miss Dormer was at once

lively, sincere, and free from every particle of austerity: she had often, though secretly, wished fervently, that the moment might arrive, in which Caroline's naturally warm affections would turn from the frivolous objects by which they were wholly engrossed, to the one, which alone is worthy to occupy exclusively the thoughts and wishes of a Christian; and she rejoiced most truly, when she found that her wish was in a fair way to be gratified.

But alas! our young pupil in the school of adversity, had still much to undergo, before the seeds of those baleful passions, which nature had implanted, and false indulgence had strengthened, were rooted from her heart. Her desire to earn her own bread was undiminished, although its source was changed; her pride no longer revolted at the thought of receiving an obligation which she could not return; but her sense of justice, and her regard for Fanny, alike forbade her to plunge that generous girl still deeper in pecuniary distress; and although Caroline's heart was rent at the thought of parting with her,

no feasible project occurred to her for their remaining together.

She was well aware, that if once she was provided for, Fanny would soon obtain a situation as governess in a family. But how was she to be provided for? Again, and again, did she ask herself this question, without being able to reply to it. One mode of subsistence, and one alone, occurred to her, the situation of teacher, either in a school or a family; but how was she, desolate as circumstances had rendered her, to procure a recommendation to such a situation?

While she was absorbed in these reflections, her good-natured landlady brought up the newspaper, and as Caroline glanced over the advertisements, she saw one which appeared so likely to suit her, if she could but obtain it, that she hastened to shew it to Fanny, and ask her advice.

It was for a young or middle-aged lady to go to Ireland as governess to three children, the eldest of whom was only twelve, and the youngest six years of age. Their mother, a lady whose health was delicate,

intended to pass a great part of her time with her children, and wished to find in their governess a companion for herself. A moderate salary only would be given, and it was requested that none but a gentlewoman, and one well acquainted with the French, English, and Italian languages would apply for the situation.

Less sanguine than Caroline, and accustomed besides to consider attentively any subject of importance before she gave an opinion upon it, Fanny could not immediately reply to Caroline's eager wishes that it was possible for her to procure a recommendation to it. At last she said, "I believe I have thought of a way to obtain one; but, my dear Caroline, you have also something to consider: if these people did not behave well to you, how severely would you repent having accompanied them to a strange country; and what might you not suffer, unknown and unfriended as you would be in Ireland, before you could obtain another situation?"

"I can hardly," returned Caroline, eagerly, "recognise my candid Fanny, in

this strange suspicious speech. Admitting, which is very doubtful, that these people accepted of my services;" and in spite of herself the word was hesitatingly pronounced, "why should I suppose they will use me ill? or why, if they did, should I be more embarrassed in obtaining a situation in a country where I should be only a stranger, and as such possessed of some claim upon a people famed for their hospitality, than here, where I am branded as ——"

Tears which she could not repress prevented her from finishing the sentence. The heart of Fanny was full also, but she suppressed her feelings, and urged the necessity there was for her making proper enquiries in case her application proved successful before she accepted the situation.

Poor Caroline! how little did she foresee when she formed the very evening before a resolution to study unremittingly the art of self-government, that the very first temptation would occasion her to relapse into all her old habits. Hurt and

irritated at an opposition to her wishes, the justice of which her pride prevented her from acknowledging, she petulantly replied, "that it was useless to contest the propriety or impropriety of accepting what she saw no probability of procuring."

"But," replied Fanny mildly, "we have been arguing on the ground that there is a possibility."

"Then for Heaven's sake!" exclaimed Caroline, "let us argue the point no further. Whatever trifling evil I may have to encounter if I go with this family to Ireland, they cannot be so bad as the mortifications I must suffer if I remain here. Do not, therefore, dearest Fanny, lose an instant, for my mind is made up to go at all hazards."

Fanny strove to suppress a sigh of regret at this proof, that the disposition of her friend was as yet little ameliorated by sorrow; but she offered no further opposition to her wishes, though she secretly determined that she would herself privately make those inquiries, which the inconsiderate Caroline did not deem necessary.

The first thing to be thought of was, a recommendation, which Fanny contrived to procure for her friend through the medium of Mrs. Fletcher. That worthy woman had been for some years acquainted with a person who had recently, by the death of some distant relations, acquired a large fortune. This sudden acquisition had not, as is generally the case, the effect of making her forgetful of those who had formerly obliged her; on the contrary, she had no greater pleasure than in returning the kindnesses of her old acquaintance. And as Mrs. Fletcher was already in the secret of Caroline's actual situation, Fanny thought she would not hesitate to ask Mrs. Belton, now a person of consequence in life, to recommend Caroline as an orphan of good family, with whom she was personally acquainted.

Every thing succeeded to Fanny's wish, except that Mrs. Belton expressed a particular desire to see the young lady, that she might not, as she phrased it, be at any loss in speaking of her if she had occasion to give her a character. Poor Fanny, who

had waited upon her to thank her for the favour she had promised to confer upon her friend, was thunder-struck when Mrs. Belton proposed their spending the next day with her.

Fanny scarcely knew at first which would be the most hazardous to her friend's interest, to comply, or to refuse. Mrs. Belton, though a very good kind of woman, was so excessively coarse in her manners, that Fanny feared it would be scarcely possible to prevent Caroline's making some haughty reply to her blunt and often rude observations, which would effectually prevent her from giving the promised recommendation: at the same time, as she had no plausible pretext for declining the invitation, she feared that by doing so she might give Mrs. Belton very serious offence, and render her lukewarm in Caroline's cause. Thus perplexed she could only resolve to accept the invitation, and to endeavour to prepare Caroline for the sort of treatment she would probably meet with.

On Miss Dormer's return home she

found her friend, for the first time since the death of her father, in tolerable spirits. She had seen Mrs. Langley, the lady whose advertisement she had answered, and she was charmed with her manners and appearance. Mrs. Langley too had appeared much prepossessed in her favour, and had appointed the next day but one to call on Mrs. Belton respecting her.

Though charmed with the mother, Caroline saw little to like in the daughters, but she was not disposed to be fastidious. The known respectability of the Langleys removed Fanny's most serious fears; but she recollected with pain, that she had heard Mrs. Langley spoken of as a woman singularly unamiable in her temper. Caroline warmly protested against the truth of such a report. She was a physiognomist, and she quoted Lavater most eloquently in defence of her new favourite.

As Fanny was too charitable to put implicit faith in what after all might be an idle report, she readily concurred with Caroline in looking only on the bright side

of the prospect; and then mentioned the invitation they had received for the next day, and the necessity they were absolutely under to accept it.

Caroline, though she disliked the visit, did not see it in the terrific light that Fanny did; and she readily promised to be cautious of giving offence to the newly created woman of consequence.

The next morning they set out for the habitation of Mrs. Belton, who welcomed Fanny with a cordial shake of the hand; but when she was introduced to Caroline, she drew back, impressed with a degree of awe, which did not tend to conciliate her in Caroline's favour.

Ashamed to think that the rich Mrs. Belton should be *cowed*, as she would have expressed herself, by the grand looks of a poor distressed young body, who had not a farthing in the world, she hastened to recall her consequence; and turning to Caroline with what she meant for an air of protection, told her that she was quite glad to have an opportunity of obliging

her old friend Mrs. Fletcher, by being of service to such a pretty, modest-looking young lady as she was.

The manner much more than the matter of this speech hurt Caroline's feelings sensibly, and she returned an acknowledgment of Mrs. Belton's kindness so coldly civil, that Fanny saw with terror, it raised a cloud upon the brow of their hostess; she hastened to disperse it, by noticing a fine boy of about five years old, who just then entered the room.

Nothing could be more *à propos*, as he was the only child of Mrs. Belton, who doated upon him to such an extravagant degree, that she completely spoiled him: and a panegyric upon his virtues and wonderful talents, which lasted till dinner was announced, saved Caroline for that time from any more of the good lady's civilities.

Perceiving that Caroline had no appetite, Mrs. Belton with vulgar good nature pressed her to eat, and loaded her plate with every delicacy on the table. Unfortunately in her eagerness to help Miss Mordaunt, she relaxed a little in the atten-

tion which she was accustomed to treat her darling Tommy with. The young gentleman speedily perceived it, and revenged the affront to his consequence by becoming so noisy, troublesome, and disagreeable, that nobody at table could be heard but himself.

He had at his own request been placed next to Caroline at table, and as soon as the cloth was removed, he desired *sans cérémonie* that she would take him into her lap. Unwilling to mortify his mother by a refusal, Caroline reluctantly complied, anticipating serious injury to her mourning from him. She soon saw that she had not been mistaken in her conjectures. Master Tommy pulled her trimming through his little dirty fingers, spilled some wine on her gown; and in spite of his mamma's often repeated, "have done, do, my pretty Tommy," completely spoiled her crape tucker.

Caroline bore all his attacks with patience till on his entangling his fingers in a black twist, to which the picture of her father was suspended, he suddenly drew

it from under her gown, and grasping it fast with one hand he tried to take it off her neck with the other, that he might have it as he said to play with.

Terrified lest he should injure it, Caroline struggled to disengage it from his grasp; and as soon as she had done so she took it from her neck and put it in her pocket, *maugré* all his cries and intreaties, that he might have it just only for a minute or two. Perceiving him almost convulsed with passion, his mother, who had no idea that any one's feelings were to be considered when it was a question to gratify the whim of her darling, desired Caroline in a voice rather of command than intreaty to gratify Tommy; declaring at the same time that if the poor child was so unlucky as to do any harm to the picture, she would take care that the damage should be made up.

Caroline's newly acquired stock of resolution and self-command failed her at this moment: turning with an air of dignity to her astonished hostess, she said with inconceivable *hauteur*, "It would

not be in your power, Madam, to perform your promise; your whole fortune could not compensate me for the damage which your son might do to a resemblance, which I prize above any thing on earth."

Alarmed for the effects which this speech might produce upon the mind of Mrs. Belton, Fanny hastily observed that it was a miniature of her friend's father, and the only portrait which she had of him. Then in hopes of soothing the turbulent Tommy, who had descended from Caroline's lap, and was roaring at some distance, she walked up to him with an essence box; but as she stooped to offer it, the angry urchin raised his hand, and gave her with all his strength a blow on the mouth.

Caroline and Mrs. Belton both started from their chairs at the same moment, but luckily for the former the mother reached her darling first, and snatching him up in her arms hurried with him out of the room.

During her absence, Fanny partly by reasoning, and partly by raillery, had succeeded in smoothing a little the angry brow of

Miss Mordaunt; but when Mrs. Belton returned, and after apologizing in her way to Fanny for what she termed the child's hastiness, proceeded to blame Caroline in no very gentle terms for being so over and above particular. Fanny's apprehensions of the effects of Caroline's reply rose to such a height, that she suddenly turned pale as ashes, and was very near fainting.

This circumstance afforded her a pretext which she gladly made use of to retire early; and Mrs. Belton, who was much pleased with the whole of her behaviour during the day, whispered her at parting, "that it was a thousand pities her friend did not resemble herself a little."

CHAPTER XX.

The next day Caroline received a note from Mrs. Langley, informing her that she had seen Mrs. Belton, and was so well satisfied with what that lady had said respecting her, that she wished to see her as soon as possible, in order to settle the time of her coming home.

Two circumstances had occurred in the morning, which induced Fanny to wish most earnestly that Caroline would resign the idea of accompanying Mrs. Langley. The first was, that Mrs. Fletcher had called upon her to inform her that Mrs. Langley's temper was of the very worst kind; and the other, that Mrs. Fletcher had heard of a situation in the family of a grocer, who was, as she expressed it, as rich as a Jew, in which she thought Caroline would be very comfortable.

From Mrs. Fletcher's description of the family Fanny thought so too; but all her

representations on the subject were in vain. Caroline's pride revolted at the thought of ever again encountering any of those who had ever known her in her days of affluence; and this reason, although she scarcely admitted its existence even to herself, determined her to run any risk rather than remain in London. Within a week Mrs. Langley's family were to set out for Dublin, and it was agreed that Caroline should not join them till the morning of the intended journey.

Now that Caroline had accomplished her first wish, that of quitting the place where she was likely to be known, her thoughts reverted to the future destiny of Fanny. There was indeed little doubt of her soon procuring a situation similar to that she had held in the family of Lady Sensitive, as her ladyship would not dare for her own sake to try to injure her. But Caroline recollected with sorrow how much her own illness and the consequent expenses of it had diminished Fanny's means of appearing like a gentlewoman; and she determined, by disposing of

every thing that she could possibly spare, to raise a sum of money, which would serve either to maintain Fanny in comfort till she was provided for, or else assist her to recruit her wardrobe.

In Mrs. Crosby Caroline found a person equally willing and able to assist her; and though she could not obtain any thing near the sum she hoped for, she yet saw with pleasure that there was enough to ward off the approach of penury, for some time at least, from the generous friend who had so nobly assisted her.

We will not dwell on the pangs which the friends experienced at parting: they were bitter on both sides; but on poor Caroline's peculiarly so. She was about to leave the only human being in whom she felt an interest, or by whom she knew herself beloved; and a sad presentiment that they might never meet again hung over her spirits. Conscience too whispered that their separation was her own fault, since if she had consented to remain in England, they could often have met. Fanny, who was possessed of more forti-

tude, struggled with her own sorrow, that she might not increase that of her friend, and bade her adieu with a degree of outward calmness, which helped to recal Caroline to some share of self-possession.

She found on her arrival, that the family were all equipped for their departure. Mrs. Langley almost started when she beheld the swelled eyes, pale cheeks, and desponding air of our heroine, of whom she coldly enquired whether she was not well. Caroline felt that the tone in which the enquiry was made, was not a kind one; but her heart was at the moment too full to pay much attention to it. It had been settled, that Miss Vernon, so Caroline called herself, should travel with the children, who eyed her askance with an air of mingled fear and dislike; for they considered her as robbing them of the company of the servants, which they would greatly have preferred. The two eldest, therefore, formed a charitable resolution to tease her by every means in their power; and we will leave them to pursue

it, while we give our readers some account of their parents.

Mr. Langley, the husband of Caroline's protectress, was a gentlemanly pleasant man, who with a very moderate understanding, believed himself at least a second Solomon in wisdom. Had any one told him that he was completely governed by his wife, he would have unhesitatingly declared the assertion a downright falsehood: nothing, however, could be more true. Mrs Langley had some talent, more cunning, and address enough to use both in subjugating her husband. She had by degrees, under the pretence of saving him trouble, gained the entire management of his property; and from an affected care for his health, she took care to regulate his table in a very plain style: indeed, in every way that she could, unobserved by him, she curtailed the expences of their establishment. In doing this she was stimulated by avarice, because, as they had no son, and Mrs. Langley now almost despaired of their ever having any, she would

be left, in the event of his death, very slenderly provided for.

Mrs. Langley was one of those people whose characters it is difficult to discover. She could wear as many shapes as Proteus, if it suited her purpose to do so; but there was one chord, which if touched, however slightly, never failed to restore her in a moment to her natural self. The instant a syllable was uttered in praise of any other woman, Mrs. Langley's assumed character was thrown aside; and the contemptuous sneer, the sarcastic remark, or the meaning shrug, presented her to the eyes of the surprised spectator in the most unamiable colours.

Though she never could have been termed handsome, yet she was when young a fine shewy woman; and though now nearly forty, she tried to persuade herself, that her personal charms were little impaired by time. Unfortunately, the male sex were of a different opinion. She began to find herself neglected in public places; and she was more than once compelled to sit still for want of a partner at a ball.

Her thirst of admiration was so inordinate, that the want of it rendered her miserable; and her temper, naturally bad, soon became insupportable to every body but her husband. Policy compelled her to be civil to him; but she took care to indemnify herself for the restraint which she put upon herself in his company, by the most liberal indulgence of her ill humour to all those who had the misfortune to be in any way dependent on her.

As Mrs. Langley hunted for celebrity in every possible shape, she had taken it into her head to distinguish herself as an educating mother; but conceiving it would be unworthy of her genius to bring up her children in what she termed the common way, she resolved to invent a system of her own. Unfortunately this system wanted continual revision; there was always something to alter or to amend; and as Mrs. Langley observed that it would be useless to begin the education of her daughters till her plan for finishing it was complete, the two eldest girls were suffered to remain in total ignorance till the eldest was

turned of ten, and the second eight years of age.

Mrs. Langley then found out, that it might be as well to engage masters to give her daughters the necessary accomplishments, reserving to herself the formation of their hearts and minds. If precept alone could have sufficed to make children moral and religious, it must be confessed that she was not sparing of it. During the two hours which she passed with them daily, she loaded them with rules for their conduct, which the children must have been stupid indeed not to perceive, were the direct reverse of her own practice; and as they found it much easier to copy that, than the rules she laid down for them, they grew up in consequence thoroughly unamiable.

The object of Mrs. Langley in persuading her husband to take a trip to Dublin, was partly economy, and partly a wish to try whether it was possible to regain in another country that admiration, which she saw clearly she could no more hope to receive in England. She began to tire

also of the expense she was at for masters, for her pride rendered it necessary for her to have the most fashionable: and she determined to engage an accomplished governess secretly, determining to make her as useful to herself as she could.

Caroline's beauty would have decided Mrs. Langley against taking her at the first glance, had she not resolved that whoever she engaged should live in total seclusion. The elegance with which she both spoke and wrote French and Italian, was a powerful recommendation; and her being an orphan, and as she learned from Mrs. Belton, perfectly friendless, was a still greater. Mrs. Langley began to find, that even occasional fits of liberality would not reconcile her servants to remain with a mistress, whom they found it impossible to please; and she reflected with pleasure, that Caroline's situation would render her so far dependant upon her, that she would not find it easy to get other protection in a strange country.

Some of my fair readers, who, happily for themselves, are exempt from all un-

gentle passions, will, perhaps, accuse me of deviating from nature in sketching the character of Mrs. Langley. Would to Heaven that the censure was a just one! but alas! there are too many Mrs. Langleys! too many, who basking themselves in the sunshine of fortune, forget that it is one of our first duties to diffuse, as far as we possess the power of so doing, happiness around us: and oh! how easy, however delightful to those who have been early taught the government of temper is this duty!

When Caroline's first emotions of sorrow had subsided, she began to think of the ill effect which a continuance of gloom might have upon the minds of her pupils; and she tried to enter into conversation with them. Monosyllables were all that she could extract from Harriet and Augusta, the two eldest. Eliza, the youngest, was at first very shy, but after a little time she ventured to sit next to Caroline, and soon became so pleased with her, that she promised to love her dearly, provided she never asked her to learn any nasty tasks.

"Then," said Augusta sullenly, "you are not likely to be friends long with Miss Vernon; for she comes to us for the purpose of making us learn tasks."

"I hope to be able to render your lessons so pleasant, that you will not consider them as tasks," replied Caroline.

"You must be very clever then, madam," said Harriet, with a sneer.

"I am sure you are very good-humoured," cried the youngest girl, looking up in her face; "and I don't believe that mamma has hired you to beat us."

Poor Caroline! will it be believed that this speech drew tears of mortification to her eyes? but she recollected the folly of suffering the prattle of a child to discompose her; and she tried to talk cheerfully to her little companions.

Her endeavours were so ill received by the two eldest, that she soon relapsed into gloomy silence; and they resumed their childish conversation, which was carried on for some time in low whispers; till Miss Augusta having said something that irritated her sister, a quarrel took place,

which, in spite of Caroline's interference, was carried to a length which shocked her, and continued till they stopped to dine.

Her journey, or some other cause, had put Mrs. Langley into such good humour, that she behaved extremely well to Caroline at table. Mr. Langley too, treated her with politeness and attention; and somewhat cheered by their cordiality, Caroline resumed her journey with renovated spirits.

CHAPTER XXI.

THEIR passage was short and pleasant; but Caroline suffered too much from sea-sickness to enjoy, as she otherwise would have done, the very beautiful prospect which presented itself, when they entered the bay of Dublin.

They soon arrived at the handsome house of Mr. Langley in Mountjoy-square, and Mrs. Langley perceiving that Caroline was extremely ill, desired as soon as she had swallowed a little negus, that she might be shewn to her apartment; and recommended her to try the effect of a few hours sleep, to relieve her from the sick languor which oppressed her.

Caroline hastened to comply with this considerate proposal; but when the servant shewed her into a miserable little room, without a fire-place, the furniture and accommodations of which, were fit

only for a menial servant, she started back in surprise and disgust, and turning to her attendant exclaimed: "You must certainly have mistaken the room; it is impossible Mrs. Langley can intend this chamber for me!"

"I am pretty sure, Madam," said the servant, "that it is the room which Mrs. Brown desired me to shew you; but if you will please to sit down a little, I will go and see whether there is any mistake."

She went, but returned in a few minutes with Mrs. Brown's (the housekeeper's) compliments to Miss Vernon, she was sorry the room did not please her, but it had been prepared for her by Mrs. Langley's particular orders.

Against this there was no appeal. Caroline cast a glance of disappointment at the little uncomfortable bed, and telling the servant to awake her a little before dinner, sat down, and began to take out her night clothes.

The servant, whose name was Nelly Gallagher, had an abundant share of that milk of human kindness, for which the Irish of

all classes are generally distinguished. She was no stranger to the real character of Mrs. Langley, who had visited Ireland for a short period a year or two before, and she pitied Caroline, for the mortifications which she felt certain she would have to endure. She offered her services to assist Caroline in undressing, with the most respectful cordiality; and our poor heroine, though she at first declined them, was not sorry to find that Nelly would not take a denial.

Much as she wanted sleep, she found it impossible to close her eyes: it was not her sense of personal inconvenience which prevented her from sleeping, it was the deep wound given to her pride. She had stipulated to be treated in all respects as a gentlewoman, and Mrs. Langley had assured her, she should look upon her as a sister. A faint hope that there might after all be a mistake, and that Mrs. Langley might be ignorant how truly uncomfortable her apartment was, arose to console her, and she soon afterwards dropped asleep.

The good natured Nelly awoke her in

time for dinner, to which she sat down with very little appetite; and considering the preparations which had been made for the repast, that was a fortunate circumstance. No fault indeed could be found with the quality of the provisions placed upon the table, but from their quantity it was very evident, that Mrs. Langley did not mean to afford her family any temptation to transgress the bounds of moderation.

In the course of the evening, Caroline took an opportunity of speaking about her apartment. Mrs. Langley listened to her with an air of surprise, and when she had concluded, coldly said, "I should be very sorry, Miss Vernon, that you had any real reason to complain of your treatment in my house; but with respect to your apartment, as it will be merely a sleeping room, I really do not see those inconveniences you speak of. As to the bed, I make no doubt that it is a good one, indeed we have no others; and the want of a fireplace can be no inconvenience, since you

certainly could not expect to have a fire in your bed-room."

This speech completely demolished Caroline's hopes of comfort in the family of Mrs. Langley; but too proud to betray the bitter disappointment she experienced, she made no reply; and as it was settled that she should the next morning commence her task of tuition, she retired at an early hour to her comfortless little apartment.

She was just about to fasten her door, when she heard a gentle tap; and on enquiring who was there, Nelly Gallagher in a low tone solicited admission.

"Arrah Miss, Jewel," cried Nelly, "excuse my boldness; but I was afraid you'd be starved outright, and so I just came up with a bowl of whey, and if you thought that you could swallow an egg, I'd get you one or two poached in half a minute."

Caroline thanked her warmly, and accepted the whey, but declined any other refreshment. Little did she think that even

that simple beverage had been procured by the poor girl out of her own pocket; for Mrs. Langley, in the true spirit of modern economy, kept all her servants upon board wages.

"And now if you please, Miss," cried Nelly, "I'll help to undress you, and you shall drink the whey as soon as you are in bed."

"I thank you, my good girl," replied Caroline; "but I must not continue to allow myself those indulgences. I must recollect," continued she, suppressing a sigh, "that I can no longer command the attendance of a servant, and I must learn to wait upon myself."

"And upon my conscience," cried Nelly eagerly, "it's a thousand pities that you ever should learn any such thing! and it is what you never shall do as long as Nell Gallagher is near you any how. But while I am a-talking, the whey will get *could*, so if you *plase*, I'll just pull off your clothes, and whip you into bed in a twinkling."

Caroline could not refuse the warm-

hearted girl, but she tried to make her comprehend the necessity there was for her in future to perform those offices for herself; and she hinted besides, that Mrs. Langley might be displeased, if she knew that any part of her servants' time was employed in giving personal attendance to her.

"Oh! I'm quite *asy* on that head, Ma'am," said Nelly; "for I know pretty well that my mistress will take care to have *plinty* of my time now she's come: but if she was ten times the *neger* she is, she could not prevent a body from having a few spare minutes for pleasure; and I'm sure it will be a pleasure for me to wait upon you, ma'am; for if I may make *bould* to say so, my heart warmed to you the very moment I clapped my eyes upon you."

The heart of Caroline was too full to reply, but she felt even to its inmost core, the artless kindness of Nelly. When the good girl had retired, she took herself severely to task for the repining and discontented spirit with which she looked

upon the trifling evils of her situation, regardless of the alleviation which they received from the kind sympathy of a sincere though humble friend.

The bowl of whey proved an excellent soporific. Caroline slept soundly, and awoke with renovated spirits. In truth, she needed them, for she had an irksome day to go through. Her two eldest pupils tried her patience severely, and she had the mortification to find that their mother, who passed some part of the morning with her, seemed little disposed to render them more amenable to her authority.

The truth was, that Mrs. Langley, although she could not find fault with the method which Miss Vernon, as we must from henceforth call her, took with her children, was displeased that she had not first consulted her; and as she was ashamed to own her pique, it vented itself in a cold neglect of Caroline, which the children quickly perceived and profited by to insult her.

A circumstance occurred in a few days, however, which threw her young tormen-

tors completely into her power, and the generous use which she made of the advantage she gained, had such an effect upon them, stubborn and indocile as they were, that they directly desisted from hostilities, and although their habits of idleness prevented their profiting much by her instructions, they ever afterwards treated her with respect.

The cause of this favourable change was, Mrs. Langley's having seen among Caroline's things a very beautiful painted gauze trimming, which she praised extravagantly; observing, at the same time, that she would give any money for such a trimming, as she should like of all things to have one to appear in at a party the ensuing evening.

"This one has never been worn," said Caroline, "and if you will honour me with your acceptance of it, it is perfectly at your service."

"My dear Miss Vernon, you are extremely kind," cried Mrs. Langley; "but I really could not answer it to my conscience, to deprive you of such a beautiful trim-

ming, and one which you would find it a difficult matter to replace."

"I assure you," said Caroline, "that it will not be a deprivation, for I question whether I could ever prevail upon myself to wear it; but even if I wished for one, I can have no difficulty in procuring it, because I painted it myself."

"Really! Well, I protest, I had no idea that you had a taste for those kinds of employments: I declare I quite envy your skill and cleverness. I wish sincerely my girls could imbibe a little of it. Apropos, how do they come on?"

"I cannot boast much of their progress."

"Then I am certain that they must be to blame, greatly to blame. Come hither, Harriet," continued she, in a severe tone, "and tell me what is the reason you do not pay proper attention to Miss Vernon's instructions?"

Harriet hung down her head, but made no reply. Augusta was next appealed to, and she answered without hesitation, that she did not know that it was necessary for her to pay attention to Miss Vernon.

"You did not know!" screamed Mrs. Langley; "is it possible then that you have forgot my particular request, that you would pay the greatest attention to whatever she said."

Augusta sturdily declared she had not forgot, for that her mamma had never said any such thing. But although Mrs. Langley's conscience told her that this was the fact, she had not magnanimity enough to own it; on the contrary, she flew into a violent passion with Augusta, whom she scolded severely for telling an untruth; and would, but for the interference of Caroline, proceeded to inflict manual chastisement upon her.

"Remember then, in future," cried Mrs. Langley, "that you are all to treat Miss Vernon with the same respect as you would myself; and tremble to disobey my orders, for you may be certain a severe punishment awaits you if you do." She then launched out into an encomium upon the uniform obedience she had always shewn to her parents. From this

she made a sudden digression to the delightful effects which the practice of benevolence has upon the mind and temper; and whilst she was in the midst of a declamation on the exquisite sensations, which spring from an endeavour to alleviate the sufferings of our fellow creatures, the young woman who attended upon her daughters entered to request her discharge.

"Bless me, Benson!" cried Mrs. Langley, "how can you think of such a thing? I cannot possibly spare you. What can have put it in your head to leave me?"

"My mother's illness, Ma'am," said the poor girl. "I have just had a letter," continued she, bursting into tears, "to inform me that she has had a paralytic stroke; and as she is so very poor, she might die for want of assistance if I do not hasten to her."

"Impossible! child. No one in England can die for want of assistance. Why does she not apply to the parish?"

Benson coloured, but made no reply. "Don't you hear me, girl? I ask you why she does not apply to the parish?

You must write to her to do that, and as I believe there is something due to you, I will advance you a little money to send to her."

"You are very good, Ma'am; but I must go to her; I must indeed."

"But why must you? how is it possible that you can be so foolish, when I have pointed out to you a way to serve her as effectually, as by your presence?"

"Oh! no, Ma'am, nothing can be so great a comfort to a sick parent, as the sight of a child. So if you please, Ma'am, I'll go directly."

"But I don't please, and you shan't go," returned Mrs. Langley, "unless indeed you chuse to go without your wages. Fine treatment this, after what I have done for you, to think of leaving me in such a manner! and at a time too, when you know I cannot replace you. This is a pretty return for the kindness which I have shewn you; but you are all alike, a pack of ungrateful, unfeeling, insensible wretches."

At this moment Caroline rose and left the room; it required all her self-command

to enable her to refrain from taking part with Benson, but her whole soul rose against the unfeeling selfishness of the hypocritical Mrs. Langley, whose hardness of heart she anathematized as she paced up and down her little room; but she forgot in the fervour of what she would have styled her virtuous indignation, that she was herself transgressing the commandment of Him, who expressly tells us to "judge not, lest we be judged."

Caroline learned afterwards that Mrs. Langley had actually refused to pay Benson, till the girl had threatened to complain to her master. This threat procured her her wages; but they were accompanied by a positive declaration that Mrs. Langley would never recommend her to another situation.

CHAPTER XXII.

It was now the latter end of October, the weather was unusually cold for the time of year, and Caroline, who had caught a severe cold, ventured to request a fire in the apartment appropriated to her pupils and herself. She was answered that it was Mrs. Langley's wish that the young ladies' frames should not be enervated by improper indulgence, and consequently they were never allowed a fire until the winter quarter had set in.

Caroline put on a cloth dress, and tried to believe that she felt very comfortable; but spite of herself her heart was chilled at the total neglect with which she was sometimes treated, and the capricious insolence which she experienced at others.

Mrs. Langley found that by a continued residence in Ireland, the expences of her establishment would be greatly dimi-

nished. She was also much pleased with the attention which she received. The frank and polite manners of the ladies, and the animated gallantry of the gentlemen, gave her every reason to believe that she should soon obtain no small share of celebrity. During her short residence in Ireland two years before, her health had been so delicate, that she passed the greatest part of her time at home; but now she found herself able to mix in the gaieties of Dublin, and she enjoyed them with a lively relish.

But as all human felicity is liable to interruption, it would sometimes happen that Mrs. Langley found herself eclipsed: a circumstance which never failed to send her home in a fit of ill humour, which rarely subsided till she had vented some part of it upon our poor heroine, whom she sometimes tormented for days together with a degree of perseverance and ingenuity, worthy of a better cause.

Nor was this all. Caroline's acknowledgment of her skill in fancy works drew upon her reiterated requests for

trimmings and toys. Naturally obliging, she was happy to purchase peace by the sacrifice of a part of her time; but when she found that she actually had not a moment to herself, she began to tire of the incessant labour imposed upon her, and she remonstrated upon the subject with Mrs. Langley.

The fact was, that Mrs. Langley, who delighted in being popular, provided she could be so without expense, had availed herself of Caroline's ingenuity to present little gifts to her friends, which she always accompanied with a declaration that they were the production of her own fancy. These presents were frequently returned by something more substantial, and Mrs. Langley felt extremely unwilling to lose the gratification, both to her interest and vanity, which she derived from them.

She saw but one way to manage, which was to compromise the matter, and she assured Caroline that as soon as some little things which she wished to have were done, it would be a considerable time before she troubled her again.

Caroline readily promised to complete the trimmings, and the other things which she wished for as soon as she could; and she did certainly apply herself sedulously to them; but she was surprised to perceive that the children, who were usually delighted when she told them to go at play hours into the garden, now seemed to make a point of pursuing their amusements in the school-room. As she could not conceive the reason of this whim, she more than once insisted upon their going into the garden; but one or other of them soon returned under the pretext of being tired, and continued in the school-room till joined by the others.

One very fine day when the two eldest went into the garden, little Eliza staid behind. The spirits of Caroline were unusually depressed, and laying down her work she drew her father's picture from her bosom and continued looking at it for some time, till feeling her sadness every moment increase, she replaced it in her bosom, saying, unconsciously as she did so, "I am to blame to allow myself

this dangerous indulgence ;" and snatching up her work she hastily resumed it.

The little girl who had approached quite close to her, now took her hand, and said in an affectionate tone, " don't work unless you like it, for I won't tell that you have been idling."

Caroline looked with surprise at the child, who immediately added, " don't be afraid, for Harriet and Augusta shan't know."

" But, my love," cried Caroline, " why should you conceal it from your sisters ?"

" Oh ! because they would tell my mamma, for she desired them to watch you."

Shocked and disgusted at this meanness, Caroline was for a moment incapable of replying, and Eliza continued :

" They don't think that I know any thing about it, for mamma did not say a word to me, but I heard Harriet telling Augusta ; and when they found that you would not let them stay and play here, they agreed to make me stay while they were in the garden."

It was no longer in the power of Caroline to doubt the truth of the child's assertion, and burning with resentment she instantly folded up her work and sent a request to speak to Mrs. Langley.

Luckily for Caroline Mrs. Langley was engaged, and by the following morning she was more cool and better calculated to enter with some degree of temper upon the subject.

No notice, however, was taken on the part of Mrs. Langley, till Caroline had sent a second message; she was then admitted to the lady's dressing-room, and she saw in the constrained air with which Mrs, Langley received her, that she was apprised of what had passed.

"I wait upon you, Madam," said Caroline calmly, "to inform you that I must either decline the honour of continuing in your family, or be suffered to appropriate a part of my time to my own use, without being subject to have the use I make of it reported to you."

"Really, Miss Vernon, this is so very —— unexpected a—— really I do not at all understand your meaning."

" I will explain it, Madam. When I formed an engagement to superintend the education of your daughters, I stipulated for the treatment of a gentlewoman, and you assured me that I should receive from you that of a sister. I entered your family with the strongest hopes of finding a comfortable home, and the most ardent desire to repay, by every means in my power, the kindness I expected to receive. Your own heart, Madam, will tell you how far my hopes and expectations have been fulfilled; but though sensibly hurt at the little attention paid to my personal accommodation, and the utter seclusion, in which it is your pleasure for me to remain, I have never uttered a complaint. But now, when I find myself tasked like a menial, nay worse, the very children, who should be taught to look up to me with respect and affection, set as spies upon my conduct; I feel it a duty both to them and myself, to put an end to a practice, the continuance of which would place me in a light too degrading to be patiently borne, and would render them artful, selfish, and deceitful, since the temptation

to practise those vices must be incessantly before them. You will therefore, Madam, decide whether I shall leave your family, or continue in it on the terms I have mentioned."

Mrs. Langley changed colour, and looked so mortified and disconcerted, that Caroline, whose resentment was always transient, felt sorry for her even before she began a confused and awkward apology; the substance of which was, that whatever Miss Vernon had to complain of should be remedied.

With this promise Caroline endeavoured to be satisfied, and in fact, her treatment was in a great measure amended. Mrs. Langley, either from caprice, or a wish to conciliate her still farther, expressed a wish to see her sometimes of an evening in the drawing-room; and Caroline, who was fond of society, gladly availed herself of an opportunity of mixing with it once more.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Caroline's uncommon beauty, as well as the dignity and polished ease of her manners, very soon rendered her an object of considerable attraction to the guests of Mrs. Langley. She had made many efforts, and tolerably successful ones, to curb her passion for admiration; but she was still woman enough at heart to feel flattered at the notice she excited, although she took herself severely to task for this remnant of vanity. She had prepared herself to meet with mortifications when she appeared as a dependent, and she was agreeably surprised at not finding any: for her exemption from them she was indebted partly to the good-nature of the Irish, who, to their credit be it spoken, rarely embitter the situation of those with whom fortune has dealt less favourably, and partly to the dignified reserve of her own manners.

Let us now see what has become of

Miss Dormer. Mr. Selden, the gentleman who was so struck with her appearance when she was returning from her unsuccessful visit to Mrs. Guzzlemore, made such enquiries after her, that he soon learned her exact situation. Mr. Selden, who was a professed disciple of Lavater, felt very well satisfied with his own skill in physiognomy, when he heard this account: for in the soft and intelligent countenance of Fanny, he had previously traced every feminine virtue.

Struck with the grateful affection with which she had repaid to the daughter the obligations she owed to the father; Mr. Selden meditated upon the possibility of being of service to her, without wounding her delicacy. He repeatedly said to himself that it was a thousand pities she should be dependent for a livelihood upon the exercise of talents, which might not always be properly appreciated. He had a sister, a widow of an amiable temper, who had only one child. Mr. Selden was very fond of his niece, who was a fine girl of ten years old; and he had often lament-

ed that she was in great danger of being spoiled by her mother's excessive indulgence. In reflecting upon the possibility of serving Fanny, it suddenly occurred to him, that by inducing his sister to take her as a governess for the little Helena, he would essentially benefit both parties.

Mr. Selden generally took time to weigh any plan he had formed before he executed it; but on this occasion he was unusually prompt. No sooner had the idea entered his head, than he hastened to the house of his sister, whom he found alone.

"I have got you, my dear Helena," cried he, "a governess for our little girl."

"I am very much obliged to you," replied Mrs. Mowbray with some surprise; "but I do not at this moment want one."

"Nay, now, my dear sister, you speak without reflection. You know I have told you a thousand times, that as Helena was growing up, she ought to have a governess whom she could respect as well as love; and I am certain, that I have found one." He then acquainted his

sister with what he had been told of Miss Dormer's history; and Mrs. Mowbray was so pleased with her conduct, that she resolved, if her talents appeared to equal her moral character, that she would engage her without hesitation.

The result of an interview which she speedily obtained with Fanny, was her making proposals to her of the most liberal nature, which Fanny, who was exceedingly pleased with what she had seen of Miss Mowbray, gladly accepted: and a little time saw her settled more comfortably than she had been since she quitted the roof of her beloved and lamented guardian.

Helena had masters for the different branches of education; but before Miss Dormer undertook the superintendence of her studies, she had not had a governess; and she was at first not a little tempted to rebel against a person to whom her mama had delegated all her own powers: probably because she feared that those powers would not lie dormant in the hands of Miss Dormer, as they had done in Mrs. Mow-

bray. But Helena, though a little spoiled, was naturally amiable; and as Fanny possessed the art of conciliating affection, as well as commanding respect, she soon became, to Mrs. Mowbray's great delight, a wonderful favourite with her daughter.

Naturally of a humble and contented spirit, Miss Dormer would have found herself truly happy, had not the letters of Caroline occasioned her considerable uneasiness. Caroline, however, did not complain of her situation: her affection for Fanny prevented her from making her friend unhappy by a disclosure of all its disagreeables. But the little that did escape her, added to the style of forced cheerfulness in which her letters were written, convinced Fanny that she was far from finding in Mrs. Langley the kind protectress which her sanguine disposition had flattered her with obtaining.

A circumstance had indeed occurred, which rendered the situation of Caroline truly uncomfortable; this was the arrival at Mr. Langley's of Desmond Pembroke,

the eldest son of the man to whom her father owed all his misfortunes.

Caroline's excessive affection for her deceased parent, led her to regard not only his false friend, but all the Pembroke family with abhorrence; and although she felt confident that he could not discover her, she could hardly refrain from abruptly quitting the roof of Mr. Langley, when she learned that he was to be the guest of that gentleman, during some months.

Viewing young Pembroke as she did with an eye of prejudice, every thing that he did or said displeased her. Very different was the impression which she made upon him: naturally of an ardent and romantic temper, he was struck at first sight with her uncommon loveliness; and his warm imagination immediately gifted her with all the perfections which a pure and violent passion in its first effervescence, generally bestows upon its object.

The visible admiration with which young Pembroke regarded her, was a serious annoyance to Caroline; but it was far greater to Mrs. Langley. Pembroke was

extremely handsome, and he added to the most polished manners, a degree of frankness, and a genuine hilarity of disposition, which rendered him particularly acceptable to the Dublin *belles*. It would have been therefore, a real triumph to Mrs. Langley to have led him about in her chains; and some attentions which he had paid her in England a few years back, induced her to hope that, as she should now have time and opportunity to set about it, she would soon succeed in making a complete conquest of his heart.

In forming this design, she had nothing in view but the gratification of her vanity; nor did she intend to carry her flirtation to what she considered a dangerous length. That is to say, she meant to stop short of actual guilt, and to content herself with making an amiable young man wretched, by raising to as great an height as she could an illicit passion, which her morality found nothing criminal in endeavouring to inspire, as long as she was determined not to gratify it. But Caroline's mischief-making beauty rendered this fine

scheme abortive, and Mrs. Langley's rage against her in consequence, knew no bounds.

She would instantly, and without ceremony have dismissed her, had it not happened that she was become a sort of favourite with Mr. Langley.

The visible improvement of the girls under her tuition had struck him forcibly, and her own manners were such as to confirm the impression, which her attention to his children had made. Mrs. Langley racked her brains in vain, for an excuse to send her away; and not being able to find one, she was forced to endure her presence a little longer; but she secretly and fervently hoped that something would speedily occur, of which she might take advantage to get rid of her.

It chanced that a few evenings afterwards, Mrs. Langley was confined with a cold; and Mr. Langley and Pembroke both gave up an engagement to pass the evening with her. The former, however, soon grew tired of the account which she began to give of the rise and progress of

her illness, which she contrived to hint, had originated in a little charitable excursion made on a damp day, and desired that Caroline might be summoned, to play at chess with him. She made her appearance in a few minutes, and soon after they had begun to play, Mrs. Langley suddenly said to Pembroke. " Pray, when does your father mean to visit his Herefordshire estate ?"

Caroline's heart beat violently, for the estate alluded to was one of which Mr. Pembroke had dispossessed her father.

" He talks of going there this summer," replied Desmond; " but some alterations must first be made, to fit it for his reception, for its late owner never inhabited it."

" I do not wonder at that," replied Mrs. Langley in a sentimental tone: " doubtless, villain as he was, his conscience could not have been so seared, as to render it possible for him to remain in the same house in which his grandfather had always resided."

I do not know his motives," replied

Pembroke gravely; "but I must observe to you, my dear madam, that notwithstanding the criminal act which has loaded his memory with obloquy, I think the unfortunate Mordaunt did not merit the epithet you have just bestowed upon him."

"The deuce he did not," cried Langley, at this moment looking up from his game; "and pray what appellation would you bestow upon him then? That of an honest man, hey?"

"No," replied Pembroke; "I do not wish to deny his guilt, but I think much may be said in palliation of it. He was brought up in the belief that he should inherit his grandfather's estates, to which he was in fact the natural heir; and at the moment of the old gentleman's demise he was, as I understand, on the verge of ruin: in this situation it is not wonderful that he should have sunk beneath a temptation so powerful. From all the enquiries I have made, I have reason to think that this was the only act of moral turpitude that ever stained his life; and I deeply regret, that

his untimely fate, and that of his daughter, should be ascribed, as I have repeatedly heard it, to the vengeance of Heaven."

Mrs. Langley was beginning to comment on this speech, when Caroline suddenly fell back fainting in her chair. Pembroke immediately flew to her assistance; and Mrs. Langley was obliged for form sake, to make a parade of trying to revive her: in a few minutes she opened her eyes, and apologising for the trouble she had given, retired to her chamber.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Our readers will readily believe, that this conversation entirely changed her opinion of Pembroke, and so completely did she do justice to his merits, that, but for two circumstances, her heart would have been in danger.

The first, was her abhorrence of his father's character; an abhorrence so strong, that to be in any manner connected with him, would have been, in her idea, a punishment more dreadful than death.

The second, was a lurking, and to herself unacknowledged partiality for Saville. She remembered how urgently her lamented father had pressed her to become his wife; and although she did not regret that she had not, by bestowing her hand upon him, made him a partner in the ruin which had overwhelmed her and her father, yet she felt the sincerest compunction for the

motives which had occasioned her rejection of him.

The mists which vanity and self-love had raised, had fled long since, before the chilling aspect of adversity. Even at the moment, in which pride and the love of pleasure held her in their chains, her heart did justice to Saville's merits, and she had need of all her resolution, of all her womanly pride, to enable her to hide the pang which his departure gave her heart.

More than once had she, in her own mind, accused him of indifference to her fate, and of want of regard for her dear father's memory, in not once making enquiries after her; but the conversation which she heard between the Langleys and Pembroke, accounted for his not doing so, in a way equally probable and satisfactory to her feelings.

It was evident that Mr. Pembroke, senior, had represented her as dead; this report had probably reached the ear of Saville, and was doubtless the cause why he had not sought to trace her out.

Caroline endeavoured to persuade herself that she was pleased it should be so, but in spite of herself, a deep sigh would force its way, when she thought of being in future dead to Saville.

While Caroline was endeavouring to lose in those reflections, her acute sense of the thousand petty mortifications, which the ungovernable temper of Mrs. Langley now rendered insupportable by her disappointment about Pembroke, overwhelmed her with: that Machiavelian dame had concerted a plan worthy of herself to get rid, upon a plausible pretext, of the poor friendless orphan, who had the assurance to put the balmy beauties of eighteen in competition with the full blown charms of forty.

Mrs. Langley began by assuming an air of depression, which had the effect she intended it to produce, of extorting from her husband affectionate enquiries as to the cause. She denied that there was a cause, but she took care to do so in such a manner as to confirm his belief that one actually existed; and when she perceived

that the poor man's curiosity, of which he had a large share, had rendered him completely anxious to discover it, she affected a still greater pensiveness, and even contrived to be found in tears.

This last circumstance so affected Mr. Langley, that he had recourse to his conjugal authority to discover the cause, and assuming at once the imperative tone, he declared that he must know it immediately.

The dutiful wife felt herself obliged to comply. With some tears, many concealments of her face to hide her want of blushes, and an abundance of hesitation and well-affected confusion, she protested her uneasiness arose from an apprehension that, unknown to himself, Miss Vernon was gaining too great an interest in his heart.

Her astonished husband was for some moments too thoroughly confounded at a charge at once so extravagant and so ill-founded to reply; and his countenance betrayed a serious displeasure, which rather alarmed his scheming helpmate.

She had, however, advanced too far to recede, and the ice once broken she volubly produced a thousand proofs as she called them; which in fact proved nothing except that, she must be either mad or a fool, to attach any meaning to circumstances, which were as the poet says,

"Trifles light as air."

But when with the greatest apparent tenderness she lamented her misfortune in having lived to see the decline of his affection; and bursting into tears declared that she would a thousand times rather have died, Mr. Langley was so moved at her evident distress, that he entirely overlooked her glaring injustice: tenderly embracing her, he declared that she was still as dear to him as ever, and since she felt uneasiness at his behaviour to Miss Vernon, he thought that the best way to remedy it would be for that young lady to confine herself entirely to the apartments appropriated for her and her pupils.

Mrs. Langley affected the most complete satisfaction at this proposal, although

it was far short of what she wished; but she trusted to the natural *hauteur* of Caroline's disposition, a *hauteur*, which in spite of her endeavours to correct, was at times very visible to the penetrating eye of Mrs. Langley, to enable her to carry her point.

From that moment she was upon the watch to seize the first opportunity which should present itself for a quarrel, and unfortunately Caroline's impetuous temper very soon gave her the occasion she was so eagerly desirous of.

It happened that by some means or other Mrs. Langley had mislaid a broach, the value of which was rather considerable. Mrs. Langley perfectly recollected taking it out of her dress to shew to Caroline, who had expressed much admiration of the ingenuity with which a small bouquet of flowers, composed of different coloured gems, was made to resemble nature. Mrs. Langley could not recollect that she had ever had it after that, and she asked Caroline whether she was quite sure that she had not put it somewhere by mistake.

Caroline, who perfectly remembered returning it into her own hands, reminded her that she had done so; but finding that Mrs. Langley could not be brought to any recollection of that circumstance, she left off trying to convince her of it, and contented herself with a declaration that it was not in her possession.

Mrs. Langley was resolved not to be convinced. Such a little thing, she observed, was so easily mislaid; and she had such a particular value for it, that Miss Vernon would, by looking for it, very much oblige her.

Though convinced that the broach was not among her things, Caroline in order to satisfy her, looked in every place where she thought it possible it might have been laid, but without success. On hearing this, Mrs. Langley's ill-humour rose to an uncommon pitch; she wisely observed, "that it was strange it could not be found, for she was sure it was somewhere;" and perceiving Caroline continue quietly to pursue her work without making any reply to this speech, she added, "that it was im-

possible for her to have made a diligent search after it since, if she had, she must have found it."

All the forbearance which Caroline had so long and not unsuccessfully strove to practise, gave way to an accusation at once so coarse and so unmerited. Turning round with quickness, she asked, "do you mean, Madam, to accuse me of telling you a falsity?"

Mrs. Langley, who like most blusterers had no small share of cowardice in her temper, felt very much inclined to evade our heroine's resentment by a direct negative; but recollecting that if she lost this opportunity for a quarrel, she might not soon find another, she sullenly replied, "that she was sure Miss Vernon could not have had time to look over all her things."

"If you mean, Madam," said Caroline, "that I have not had time to unlock my drawers and trunks, you are right; I have not done so, because I am perfectly conscious that I never could have laid your broach in any of them; but every place

where it was possible to suppose I might through mistake have put it, I have searched and in vain."

Still Mrs. Langley was not satisfied, she urged her to search again; and upon her peremptory refusal so to do, rudely declared that she had no idea of such obstinacy in a person whose situation ought to have taught her more humility.

Caroline's face glowed with a resentment which she no longer endeavoured to subdue. "You have, indeed, Madam," cried she, bitterly, "taken some trouble to teach me humility; but as I fear I am too unpromising a pupil ever to attain that degree of it, which teaches us to bear the grossest insults without reply, I will rid you of your painful task: it is my determination to leave you the moment you have procured a person to supply my place."

Mrs. Langley, who heard and recognized her husband's step, found that this was a very proper moment to burst into a flood of tears; and the instant that Caroline, who had no wish for a scene, made her

exit at one door, Mr. Langley entered at another.

To his eager enquiries as to the cause of her distress, Mrs Langley after *quantum sufficit* of sobs and sighs, at last made shift to falter out, that her favourite broach, which she took care to remind him was a present from himself, was mislaid; that she had never seen it since she had been shewing it to Miss Vernon; and that because she had asked that young lady to look if she had in a mistake put it among her own trinkets, she had thrown herself into a violent passion, had abused Mrs. Langley in the grossest terms; and had finally declared that she would leave them.

Mr. Langley was very sorry, but as he gave implicit credit to his wife's account of the matter, he could not help thinking Miss Vernon had acted very improperly. Yet as he was perfectly sensible of the advantages which his children derived from her instructions, he would have endeavoured to accommodate matters, but he recollected the jealousy which his wife had betrayed, and he feared to increase it

by taking any step to retain Miss Vernon in his family. He therefore determined to let things take their course, and his lady looked forward with exultation to the speedy departure of Caroline.

CHAPTER XXV.

Mrs. Langley's efforts to separate Pembroke and Caroline would, had our heroine herself so pleased, have been a means of uniting them for ever.

Pembroke had as little vanity in his composition as most men; but the manners of Mrs. Langley towards him would not permit him to doubt that he might have avowed himself her slave, without exciting any very violent displeasure in her gentle bosom. He estimated her exactly as she deserved to be estimated; that is to say, he thoroughly despised her for a heartless coquet, who would willingly have immolated his peace of mind, at the shrine of her own vanity.

Some days had passed since he had seen Caroline, and he more than half suspected that her absence from the drawing room arose from Mrs. Langley's desire to

keep her out of his way, when he learned accidentally, that she was in a few days to quit the house.

This circumstance precipitated his measures. Fully sensible that his father would never consent to his marriage with a girl in her destitute situation, he had no alternative but to lose her, or prevail upon her to consent to a private union.

The struggle between filial duty and passion, terminated, as is unfortunately too generally the case, with those who have not been taught to restrain their passions, in the complete triumph of the latter. In a letter which Pembroke addressed to Caroline, he declared his love in the most ardent and respectful terms. But while he implored her consent to an immediate union, he was obliged to acknowledge at the same time, his wish that it should be a secret one.

Caroline refused his offer without hesitation; but her rejection was so gentle, that he could not help fancying if he was allowed to try the effects of time and perseverance, he might yet succeed.

With this view he determined to find out where Caroline meant to go on leaving the Langleys, and he employed his valet, a smart young Englishman, to obtain for him the necessary information.

It happened that this young man, whose name was Burton, was the humble servant of Nelly Gallagher; and as he very well knew her attachment to our heroine, he made no doubt of obtaining the information he wanted from her. Nelly, however, could not satisfy him; for Caroline, who suspected that Pembroke would endeavour to trace her, resolved to keep her future residence a secret.

But when Burton intrusted Nelly, after an oath of secresy, which to make assurance doubly sure, he sealed with a kiss, that his master was honourably and passionately enamoured of Miss Vernon, and desired nothing more than to make her his lawful wife, she was upon the alert in a moment. Sincerely rejoicing in the good fortune of her dear Miss Vernon, and resolved that she should not lose it through a little maidenly coyness, for

Nelly had no notion that her favourite could have any serious objection to the handsome young squire; she gave Burton a positive assurance, that by hook or by crook, she would find out for his master, where the dear young lady was to go to.

Caroline when she had time to cool, sincerely regretted the hasty manner in which she had thrown herself once more friendless upon the world. Shall I never, sighed she, subdue this fatal impetuosity, or rather let me call it this unchristian pride of heart, which makes me so ready to construe into insult, what was perhaps spoken in mere thoughtlessness. Alas! how frequently ought I to recollect that in my days of affluence, I too often wounded the feelings of those obliged to bear with my capricious impertinence, let me then accept with cheerfulness the chastisement I have so well deserved.

Our heroine's first consideration now was, how she could dispose of herself. She had an invincible repugnance to the

thought of returning to England, yet unknown as she was in Ireland, she scarcely knew how to flatter herself with the hope of obtaining a situation; especially, as she feared that Mrs. Langley, whom she justly suspected of uncommon malignity of disposition, should, although she could not bring forward any thing to her discredit, yet speak of her qualifications in such luke-warm terms as would disgust any one who might apply to her.

The first thing to be considered, previous to her taking any step, was the state of her finances; and upon calculating the probable expense of a decent lodging for a few weeks, she determined to risk the experiment of taking one, and of calling upon those ladies whom she had seen at Mrs. Langley's, as soon as she was settled, and intreating their good offices to recommend her as a governess.

The hectic of a moment which crossed her cheek as she made this determination, sprang, we fear, from that passion, which had been the bane of her past life;

But if she had not been able to eradicate it, she was at least resolved not to indulge it; and as Mrs. Langley informed her, through the medium of one of her pupils, that she had engaged a French lady, who would come home in a few days, Caroline set out directly in search of an apartment.

After some hours spent in a fruitless search after one, which would suit her finances, without disgracing her by its shabbiness, she at last fixed upon a neat apartment on Summer Hill, to which she gave a preference, on account of its cheapness; although the unpleasantness of her landlady's manners made her fearful that she should not find it a comfortable residence.

Caroline was sensibly touched with the tears and lamentations of her youngest pupil, from whom she parted with real regret. The child, whose heart was naturally affectionate, had become greatly attached to her, an attachment which Caroline returned with interest. Nor could she listen unmoved to the blessings and

prayers, accompanied with tears, which Nelly Gallagher, with true Irish fervour, offered up for her future happiness.

Caroline, whose native generosity spurned the restraints which prudence would have imposed upon a more considerate mind in her situation, would have forced upon the weeping girl a handsome present, but Nelly steadily and almost indignantly refused it.

"Och, Miss Vernon, my jewel!" cried she, "it's yourself that has got the spirit of a queen, and I wasn't *desaved*, when I said the very first moment I saw you, that you were a true *jantlewoman* every inch of you. Sure, and it's nothing at all at all that ever I've done for you, except wishing you well to the bottom of my heart, and *plase* the saints I'll never be such a * *neger* as to think of being paid for good wishes."

Caroline who had really been indebted to this good girl for many little personal services, would have insisted upon her ac-

* Niggard.

ceptance of a recompense, had she not feared by doing so to hurt her feelings. She secretly determined, however, if fortune ever should favour her, that Nelly's disinterested kindness should not be forgotten.

Nelly meanwhile, fully persuaded that she was doing Caroline a real service, contrived, with the help of a little whiskey, to obtain her address from the hackney coachman who carried her to her new habitation; and Pembroke, who hoped more from a personal interview than a letter, resolved to lose no time in waiting on her. But as he justly thought that if he gave his card to the servant, Caroline would refuse to admit him, he had recourse to stratagem, and the next morning when he presented himself at her door, he announced himself to the domestic as a gentleman from Mrs. Langley.

The unsuspicious Caroline desired immediately that he might be shewn up, but she started with undissembled vexation on Pembroke's entrance, for she instantly

guessed the trick which had been played her.

Poor Pembroke was so struck with the coldness of his reception, that some minutes elapsed before he had courage to open the subject of his visit. When he did, however, Caroline attempted to stop him: but rendered desperate by the reflection that this would, in all probability, be the only opportunity he should ever have to plead his cause, he begged so earnestly to be heard, that Caroline could not, without actual rudeness, refuse his request.

Perceiving all his arguments ineffectual, he passionately conjured her to take at least a few days to consider before she renounced him for ever. As he spoke he dropped upon his knees, and at that moment the servant of the house entered. Casting an impertinent glance at Caroline, who was ready to sink with confusion, the girl said, "I thought you rang, Ma'am," and then hastily retired.

Shocked at the thought of the suspi-

cions which this circumstance might give rise to, Caroline, bursting into tears, conjured Pembroke instantly to leave her, and never, on any pretence, to renew his visit. He would have remonstrated, but she was peremptory: and feeling that any opposition at this moment might render her for ever inexorable, the mortified Pembroke withdrew.

In a few minutes after he had done so, her landlady, Mrs. Bryan, sent a request to speak to her. Though at the moment little fitted for conversation, our heroine did not deem it prudent to refuse. Mrs. Bryan entered with a supercilious air, and seating herself unasked, commenced a long harangue, by a declaration that she was a woman of few words, that she never had any but respectable people lodge in her house; and that, for the sake of her own reputation, she was determined our heroine should instantly leave it.

This was the subject of an harangue; the insulting nature of which was rendered still more obvious by the coarse terms in which it was delivered.

The blood rushed tumultuously to the cheek of Caroline, at being thus levelled with the vilest of her sex; but perhaps for the first time in her life indignation did not conquer prudence. Instead of following her first impulse to quit the house of this insolent and unfeeling woman, without deigning to come to any explanation, she reflected that she owed it to her own character to clear up the circumstance, from which Mrs. Bryan had drawn such injurious conclusions; and she did it with a calm dignity of manner, which convinced her prejudiced and vulgar landlady, that she had, as she expressed it, for once in her life been mistaken.

She took her leave with what she intended to be a civil intimation to Caroline, that she might remain in the apartments; and our heroine no sooner found herself alone, than she gave vent to her feelings in a passionate burst of tears.

" Oh, my father!" cried she, " my dear indulgent father, would to Heaven I had died with thee! Ah! surely if at the moment which deprived me of thee, I could

have foreseen the sufferings which awaited me, death would have saved me from encountering them."

The recollection of her youthful days, of the fond though mistaken indulgence which had prevented her every wish, soon gave a softer character to the indignant sorrow of Caroline; but these recollections were more dangerous to her peace of mind than the stormy bursts of wounded pride; and it was a considerable time before her utmost efforts could conquer the depression they produced.

That day and the next she remained at home; but the third morning, ashamed of remaining any longer inactive, at a time when exertion was so necessary, she sallied forth to call upon those ladies whom she had seen at Mrs. Langley's.

Her first enquiry was answered by, "not at home:" and though angry with herself for feeling it, she could not avoid experiencing a sensation of pleasure, at what she considered as a temporary relief from the meanness of solicitation. Her

next enquiry was for a Mrs. O'Connor, a frank pleasing woman, who had appeared much taken with her; and, as this lady was at home, Caroline was directly admitted.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Caroline's spririts were so raised by the friendly reception of Mrs. O'Connor, that she entered as soon as she could on the subject of her visit.

Mrs. O'Connor readily promised to make enquiries after a situation for her; adding at the same time, "I know of one at this time, but I am certain that it is one which will not suit you."

"After such a declaration," said Caline blushing, "I fear that you will think me impertinently curious if I ask you for the particulars of it; and yet———"

Mrs. O'Connor, who saw that she hesitated, kindly interrupted her, with a promise to tell her the particulars, upon condition that she would stay and spend the day with her: and having overruled Caroline's objections on the score of dress, she proceeded to relate them.

"I must promise to you," said she, "that the situation which I mean, is not that of governess, but companion to an English lady, who is married to an Irish gentleman, with whom she resides in the north."

"I should not at all object to a situation as companion," said Caroline eagerly.

"But, as I believe, my dear, that you are not a catholic, and of course cannot be desirous of having your purgatory in this life," said Mrs. O'Connor, "I think it may be necessary to acquaint you with a little of the private history of Lady Muggins; after which, if you continue to wish for the situation of her companion, I can assure you of it, as she has requested me to provide her one."

"Her Ladyship's present husband, Mr. M'Shaughlin, is Mr. O'Connor's agent. He began life in a very humble sphere, but being equally shrewd, honest, and industrious, he acquired, by degrees, property sufficient to enable him to shut up a shop, which he kept for many years, and to con-

fine himself to acting as agent for different gentlemen, to whom his probity and his skill in business had recommended him. Business carried him to England; and while there he made a conquest of Lady Muggins, the rich widow of an eminent pork butcher, who left her upwards of twenty thousand pounds, which his industry, aided by her parsimony, had accumulated; and what was of nearly equal value in her eyes, a title, which he had been honoured with on presenting a city address.

"The handsome person of Mr. M'Shaughlin, who was at that period about thirty-five, made a sensible impression on the tender widow, then in her fiftieth year; and although Mr. M'Shaughlin could not have been violently enamoured of her, her title rendered the preference which she gave him flattering to his vanity. I have been told, that the lady intimated her love so plainly, that poor M'Shaughlin, who had a wonderful faith in the power of Cupid, conceived himself bound, out of common humanity, to pre-

serve the fair lady's life at the expense of his freedom: and he did what few men would have done in his place, he generously settled all her fortune upon herself.

"Shortly after the celebration of their nuptials, business obliged Mr. M'Shaughlin to return to Ireland, and his lady willingly accompanied him. But almost immediately after their arrival in this country, mutual discontent took place of matrimonial harmony. Her Ladyship, proud of her wealth, her title, and her connections among, as she phrased it, the most *substantialist* and *toppingest* people in the city of *Lunnun,* found every thing in our poor little island insupportable. She declared, indeed, on her third day's residence in it, that it was the most barbarous, outlandish place on the face of the *varsal* globe; and as to the people, she was sure that they had not half the politeness of some *selvidges* which she had read about in history. As the *amor patriæ* is M'Shaughlin's weak side, he defended his native land with more spirit than temper; and the consequence has been a succession of

quarrels, which have nearly extinguished her love for her husband, as well as rendered their lives very uncomfortable.

"As to her Ladyship's general character, she is vulgar to a degree; and it is doubtful which is most galling to those around her, her parsimony, or her ill temper. And now, my dear," said Mrs. O'Connor laughing, "I believe you are no longer solicitous for the honour of her Ladyship's protection."

Caroline owned she was not. Her spirits were cheered by Mrs. O'Connor's kind assurances, that she would make immediate enquiries among her friends, and that she had little doubt of soon hearing of something which would suit her; and after spending a very pleasant day, and promising soon to repeat her visit, she returned home in much better spirits than she had when she quitted it in the morning.

During the two following days she occupied herself with repairing her wardrobe, a task which she never could find time at Mrs. Langley's to attend to. On the

morning of the third, she had a visit from Mrs. O'Connor; but the pleasure which the sight of that lady gave her, was instantly checked, by perceiving that an unusual seriousness overspread her good-humoured and open countenance.

"My dear Miss Vernon," said she, after a pause, "I wish to speak to you on a subject, on which you have been, I am convinced, very unjustly traduced. May I hope that you will acquit me of impertinence, and believe that nothing but a desire to serve you, would induce me to take a privilege, to which, in fact, our intimacy has not yet entitled me; I mean, that of speaking about your affairs."

Caroline turned pale as she desired her to proceed; and Mrs. O'Connor kindly telling her not to alarm herself, as she had no doubt that they would soon be able to clear her from the charge against her, proceeded to inform her of the reasons Mrs. Langley had assigned for her quitting her family.

It chanced that that lady's *soubrette* had been an old friend of Caroline's landlady,

and being deputed by her mistress to make enquiries respecting Caroline's behaviour, and visitors, she returned with intelligence which roused all the angry passions in the bosom of Mrs. Langley into a flame; and she basely determined to sacrifice, if possible, the reputation of Caroline to her own disappointed vanity.

In pursuance of this malicious resolution, she told a lady, a friend of Mrs. O'Connor, who made some enquiries respecting Caroline, that Miss Vernon was certainly very clever, but that she was also very artful. That she had taken occasion to quarrel with her for a mere trifle, and had quitted her in the most haughty manner. That she, Mrs. Langley, was at first very much at a loss to account for this, as she knew Miss Vernon had no friends, or at least, none who were capable of serving her; but that she had since learned, it arose from a connection which she had formed with Mr. Desmond Pembroke, who visited her openly at her lodgings.

The paleness of death itself overspread

the cheek of Caroline, at an accusation, which unjust as it was, she had no satisfactory means of refuting. Yet even in the first moments of her alarm, her spirit rose at the mean malignity of Mrs. Langley, in thus seeking the destruction of one who had never injured her.

Caroline's natural delicacy would have made her under other circumstances scrupulously guard the secret of Pembroke's attachment: but she thought it would be at once disingenuous and impolitic to place a half-confidence in Mrs. O'Connor, and she candidly related to her the real reason of her quitting Mrs. Langley's family, as well as what had occurred since.

Mrs. O'Connor begged of her to be cheerful, and promised to represent the matter in a proper light to all her female friends; but unluckily, Mrs. Langley's story had been so plausible, and related with so much art, that she had succeeded in raising a general prejudice against our unfortunate heroine, and notwithstanding the zealous endeavours of Mrs. O'Connor

to obtain for her a situation, weeks rolled on, and found her still unemployed.

Although Caroline had husbanded with the extremest frugality the little money she had on quitting Mrs. Langley's, it was nearly exhausted. Mrs. O'Connor had in the most delicate manner offered her a supply; yet pride, which she disguised under the name of a dislike to pecuniary favours, hindered her from accepting it; and she shrunk with mingled disgust and terror from the thought of being indebted to her landlady, notwithstanding she was now very civil, even for a short time.

Her dislike to return to England was still in full force: true, she longed ardently to see Fanny, but it was a pleasure she could not resolve to purchase by returning to London, where she dreaded encountering perpetual mortification, in being recognized by her former acquaintance; and where, after all, she had no certainty of obtaining a situation, and if she did not, she must again become burthensome to her generous friend.

"No," thought she; "let me rather

encounter those evils which Mrs. O'Connor warned me, the companion of Lady Muggins must expect. I am sure I can submit to them, or to any thing, rather than to become again burthensome to my kind friend."

CHAPTER XXVII.

Having worked herself up to this resolution, Caroline hastened to communicate it to Mrs. O'Connor, who heard her with undissembled surprize, and strove earnestly to dissuade her from her purpose. But Caroline's pride, which, on this occasion she ingeniously decked in the garb of laudable resolution, was proof to all the affectionate Mrs. O'Connor could urge; all that lady could prevail upon her to promise was, that if she found her situation insupportable, she would either return to Dublin, or go back to London; and that she would accept from her whatever money she might stand in need of, to convey her comfortably to either place.

At her desire, Mrs. O'Connor wrote immediately to Lady Muggins, and knowing perfectly the character of her ladyship, she took care to give a proper share of

consequence to her friend, Miss Vernon, whose birth, breeding, and elegance of manners she placed in a conspicuous point of view.

Her ladyship was charmed to meet with such an acquisition as she thought Miss Vernon would prove, and requested the young lady's company immediately at Rosebud Bower, which was, she informed Mrs. O'Connor, the present appellation of Mr. M'Shaughlin's seat.

Caroline could not help laughing, when she afterwards found that Rosebud Bower, which had been distinguished time immemorial by the name of Shamus town, was a substantial common built house, which was totally devoid of all claim to its romantic appellation; since the garden intended for use, not ornament, contained little else than vegetables; and the inside of the house corresponded so happily with the out, that its new name was the standing jest of the neighbourhood.

" If," said Mrs. O'Connor, " her ladyship would content herself with nick-naming her house, ruling her husband, and

abusing his country, I could forgive her; but I very much fear that the dislike which I have to her already will be augmented by her behaviour to you. However, as you will persist in trying her, I must endeavour to hope the best, and if any thing can induce her to lay a restraint on her temper, I think it will be the fear of being exposed and ridiculed among those who employ her husband. We Irish," pursued she with a good-natured smile, " are a little too Aristocratic in our notions: wealth is not with us a passport to good society. I confess I have sometimes regretted that we had not a little English liberality in that respect, when I have seen well educated and amiable girls excluded, because their fathers were in trade, from circles which they would have proved ornaments to. But I have become reconciled to our injustice in this particular, because it precludes the possibility of us patricians being annoyed by this detestable Lady M'uggins."

Caroline, though she was become really attached to Mrs. O'Connor, could not

help hoping that she in a great degree exaggerated her ladyship's defects; she perceived that the warm-hearted Irish woman's national pride was wounded by the illiberal dislike which Lady Muggins had expressed to her beloved country; and she had seen enough of the Irish character, to know that their feelings are seldom in a medium, those to whom they are attached have in their eyes no faults, but mercy on the objects of their dislike, for it is a thousand to one if they are allowed to possess a single virtue.

Mrs. O'Connor took a most affectionate leave of Caroline, who struggled in her presence to retain some appearance of fortitude; but no sooner had she taken her place in the mail in which she happened to be the only inside passenger, than she gave way to a passionate burst of tears; and for some time she wept with excess of bitterness over the evils which her fancy conjured up to menace her comfort in the situation she had just accepted.

But with all Caroline's faults she was not naturally a self-tormentor; and when

the first bitterness of her feelings had subsided, she reproached herself severely for having yielded to them. Struck with a sense of her ingratitude to that Providence, whom misfortune had taught her to look up to with humble confidence, she dried her eyes, and began to plan a scheme of self-government for the future, by which she hoped to be fully enabled to conquer her foibles.

Her reflections were interrupted at the end of the first stage by the entrance of an elderly gentleman, whose looks proclaimed him very much out of humour. He had not been seated many minutes, before he indulged himself in a long and loud invective against Ireland, and every thing in it. When he had nearly run himself out of breath, he appealed to Caroline whether she had ever seen such a barbarous place in her life.

"The little I have seen of the country, Sir," said she drily, "has prepossessed me much in its favour."

He stared at her with visible astonishment, but made no reply, and they both

continued silent till they stopped to dine. Caroline could scarcely refrain from laughing as she raised her eyes to those of her fellow traveller, when the dinner was placed upon the table. The expression of his countenance was ludicrous beyond description. Surprise, anger, and disappointment were all blended in the look which he cast upon the rusty ham, and ill-dressed shoulder of poor lean veal, which were placed upon the table.

After surveying it for some moments in rueful silence, "Why what in the devil's name do you call this?" vociferated he to the waiter.

"*Vale*, your honour; a shoulder of *vale*, *plase* your honour."

"Veal, what this! why 'tis hardly good enough for dogs. What else have you got in the house?"

"Oh plenty of things; there's *could* leg of mutton, and salt beef, and a pig's face."

"Confound you and your pigs! your provisions are only fit for them, I think. Have you no poultry; no fish?"

" We have no fish, to be sure," replied the waiter; " but for poultry, plase your honour, we may challenge the whole county, and the next to it for that matter."

" But, zounds, by the time you could dress me a capon, or even a chicken, the mail will be off."

" Sure and it will; because, why they are every one at roost at this very moment."

This discovery completely put to flight the small remains of our *gourmand's* patience, and with a volley of oaths, from which Caroline shrunk in mingled wonder and disgust, he ordered some wine and cheese. He was not allowed, however, to finish his meal of this homely fare, for before he had half done he was obliged to resume his seat in the coach.

Unluckily for Caroline the mail did not go nearer than within eighteen miles of Rosebud Bower, and she was consequently obliged to post it the rest of the way. As it was her second day's journey, and she

was anxious to reach Rosebud Bower in good time, she begged that the waiter would hasten the chaise, and when he left the room to do so, she stood at the window impatiently watching its approach.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

At last it made its appearance to Caroline's utter dismay, for she beheld a crazy, dirty vehicle with one window broken, and drawn by a pair of horses; one of which seemed hardly able to crawl, and the other, having all the skin rubbed off his shoulder, winced at every step. To proceed on her journey in such a conveyance seemed impossible, and she rang immediately to ask if it was not possible to procure a better chaise.

"Sure and it is not," said her host, who himself attended her summons, "for there's no other chaise at all at all, but one that's out, and wont be at home before morning."

"If it is a good one, I had rather wait for it, ieplied Caroline."

"Oh as for goodness, sorrow one need

fault it, that is in dry weather like this; to be sure the rain comes in a little through the roof, and it is no *asy* matter to keep the door shut without holding it, because the lock's spoiled. I think though I did hear our Jem say that there was something the matter with one of the springs, but I dare say it will be strong enough to bear so light a load as your ladyship's luggage."

"Even by your own account," cried Caroline, "the vehicle must be as unsafe as this."

"Unsafe," repeated the landlord in a tone of resentment, "Lord help *yees*, 'tis little you know about travelling, I'll be bail, when you talk of such chaises as mine to be unsafe. Sure, and there can't be a *nater* nor a *complater* chaise any where at all, barring accidents, than that very one that's now standing before *yees*."

Had not Caroline been really alarmed for her personal safety, she would have indulged in a hearty laugh at the satisfied air with which her host surveyed his boasted chaise

"Are these your only horses?" cried she.

"Oh no," said the landlord, "we have another pair besides them, that's out."

"And why can't I have the other pair?"

"Sure and you might if you choose it, but one of them's blind, and the other has a mighty ugly habit of falling upon his knees every now and then."

"If that is the case," cried Caroline, who saw clearly that she had no alternative, "I had better depart as soon as this chaise is ready. So tell them if you please to tie on my luggage."

After delaying till Caroline's patience was nearly exhausted, she was informed that all was ready, and she took her seat in the comfortless vehicle, which went at a quicker rate than she had supposed possible.

The driver, whose appearance was in perfect unison with the chaise, diverted Caroline's attention from her own situation, by the gay hilarity with which he whistled, sang, and talked Irish alternately to

his horses and to a cur dog who sat with him, whom he called Sparkler.

For some time, notwithstanding the badness of the roads, the chaise went on very well, but just as Caroline was beginning to congratulate herself on the prospect of concluding her journey in safety, the driver turned round to beg that she would not be frightened, because they were just coming to an ugly bit of road.

"Oh, pray," cried Caroline, "let me get out then!" "Lord love ye, ma'am, it wouldn't be the least use your getting out, for you could no more walk through it than you could fly; so rest you *asy*, and I'll be bound that all the harm you'll get will be a little *jolting*."

The good-natured fellow, however, was mistaken, for they had hardly proceeded ten steps when one of the wheels came off, and the chaise was overturned. Fortunately for Caroline she fell upon a heap of dung which was close to the road side, and consequently escaped without any serious injury.

" And it's ourselves that's lucky in the middle of our misfortunes," cried Bryan Clogherty, the driver, as soon as he had ascertained that Caroline was not hurt.

" Lucky!" repeated she in an accent of surprise, " sure enough; for if the chaise had turned over in any other part of the road, what must have become of *yees*?"

" What indeed!" thought Caroline as she looked round on the heaps of stones which were scattered on each side of the road, and mentally returned thanks to Providence for the narrow escape she had just had.

" But what, my good friend," cried she to Bryan, " are we to do? I see no sign of any habitation near us."

" There's the widow Mulrooney's cabin about a quarter of a mile lower down, and if you *plase*, ma'am, we'll go there I know they are poorly off just now, but you will be sure of a *clane* bed and a hearty welcome, and that's what they'd give, begging your pardon, ma'am, to a dog belonging to me."

"Come then, my good Byran, let us go there directly," cried Caroline; but her speed was soon checked by perceiving that she had sprained her ancle in the fall.

The good-natured Bryan, however, soon settled the matter by taking her up in his arms, and declaring that he would not mind walking ten miles with her ladyship, for she was as light as a feather. They soon reached the cabin, which was much more decent and comfortable than the habitations of the lower class of the Irish generally are. The widow, a good-humoured looking woman of about fifty, bustled about immediately to render Caroline all the assistance she could; and while she and her daughter, a girl of eighteen or nineteen were thus engaged, Bryan, who had run on to another cabin farther down to get assistance, found a *gossoon*, who agreed to remain with the chaise and horses for the time necessary.

"And now, Ma'am," said the widow, when she had assisted Caroline to change her habit for her night clothes, "may be

you could eat a new laid egg and a rasher of bacon. I am ashamed that my poor place affords nothing better to offer you."

Caroline who felt exceedingly faint declined the proffered refreshment, but asked for a draught of milk, which they said she should have directly.

"Not if it puts you to the trouble of sending out of your house for it," cried she, "for a glass of water will do just as well; so let me beg that you will give me one instead of the milk."

"Go, Nelly," said the widow, "and get the lady something, and make haste." The latter injunction appeared to be needless, for Nelly darted away with the rapidity of a young fawn, and in about a quarter of an hour returned with a small loaf of white bread, some tea, sugar, and cream. The widow, who had probably guessed her daughter's intention, had in the mean time set the tea-kettle over the blazing turf fire, and she now prepared to make Caroline some tea.

"Indeed," said our heroine, "I am truly sorry to put you to all this trouble and in-

convenience. I would have stopped your daughter had I guessed her errand."

"Indeed, and you would not if you plase, Ma'am," cried the hospitable widow, "for its Nelly that's light of the foot, and a shame it would be if she was not, when it was to get something to comfort you after your ugly accident. Two or three years ago I need not have sent to a friend for such a little matter as this; but God's will be done, and thanks be to Him I have good neighbours still!"

From this speech, and what had before fallen from Bryan, Caroline was convinced that the widow had suffered in her circumstances, and she admired her cheerful resignation. She perceived on looking round, that the cabin owed its air of comfort to its perfect cleanliness, and the neatness with which every thing was arranged; for the furniture was of the meanest description, and there seemed to be only what was absolutely necessary.

While Caroline drank her tea, she observed to the widow that she thought herself fortunate in having met with the hu-

mane Bryan, in whose praise she was very lavish; but chancing as she spoke to glance at Nelly, she perceived her face covered with blushes, and her eyes full of tears.

Her mother also perceived it, and she said to her daughter in an affectionate tone, " don't be ashamed, Nelly dear, though he is as poor as ourselves, there is not a better hearted boy in the county; and if it plases God that yees do come together, it's he that will make thee a good husband I'll be bail. She is a little dashed before you, Ma'am," continued she addressing Caroline, " because he is her *bachelor*."

The countenance of Nelly, who had retired while her mother spoke, sufficiently explained to Caroline a phrase which would otherwise have been unintelligible, and she very cordially wished the young couple happiness.

" God send it!" said the widow, with a deep sigh; " but I have got no great hopes at present."

Caroline, who was much prepossessed

in favour of Nelly as well as her intended husband, expressed a wish to know the cause of her tears; and the frank-hearted widow soon gratified her curiosity.

But as her detail might be too prolix for the patience of our readers, we shall deliver it in our own language, and as this chapter is already long enough, we shall introduce the history of our favourite Nelly at the beginning of the next.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The father of Nelly had held a small farm under a gentlemen, who did what very few gentleman in Ireland do, that is, looked into his own affairs. And as there was no *middle man* to rack-rent the poor tenants, nor griping steward whom they were obliged to propitiate, they were able to live comfortably, and to pay their rents in general with great regularity.

Mr. O'Berne, who was in many respects a singular character, was remarkably strict in this last particular. If sickness, a bad crop, or any other unavoidable misfortune oppressed a tenant, he came to his assistance in the most liberal manner; but he was a professed enemy to idleness or extravagance, and those who had a tendency to either, found him as strict as he was lenient to others.

Mulrooney's lease had nearly expired,

but his landlord, with whom he was a particular favourite, promised to renew it on the same terms. Mulrooney thanked him, and was retiring, when O'Berne called to him to return. "Your daughter Nelly grows a fine young woman," said he, "why don't you look out for a good husband for her?"

"Time enough, please your honour," replied the farmer: "she is but young yet."

"Her mother was scarcely her age, if I remember right, when she married you. Has the girl a sweet-heart?"

"I don't believe she has; and since I must tell your honour the truth, I would rather she had not till I can save something to give her."

"Well, Mulrooney, look her out a good husband, and remember that there are twenty pounds in my hands to help the young couple forward."

"My blessing be about you for ever and ever, and God reward your honour! Sure and he must reward you, for no one else can," cried the overjoyed farmer. The words of Mulrooney might surely be re-

garded as prophetic, for three days afterwards the truly benevolent O'Berne fell from his chair, and almost instantly expired: and if a life spent in the practice of every christian virtue can ensure salvation, great indeed must have been his reward.

This event caused a sad alteration among the tenantry, for the next heir was the reverse of their late landlord in every thing. He came from England, where he always resided, to take possession; and no sooner had he done so, than he returned thither, leaving a steward behind him, with strict orders to make the most of the land, and raise the leases as they fell in, as high as he possibly could.

The steward promised to do his best, and he kept his word so effectually, that such of the tenants as had leases of some length generally resigned them, rather than continue to suffer under the various species of oppression by which he contrived to render their lives miserable.

Mulrooney pleaded in vain the promise of his deceased landlord. Mr. O'Gahagan, for shame to say, this petty tyrant

was an Irishman, laughed at a promise to which the farmer could bring no witness ; and gave him his choice, either to stay at a rent, which he was conscious the land would not enable him to pay, or else turn out.

Two days afterwards, O'Gahagan met Nelly in a lane leading to her father's house. She was in tears, but the licentious O'Gahagan, who had for some time secretly coveted the possession of her person, thought that her eyes looked unusually bright through them. She saluted him respectfully, and was passing on, when he stopped her to enquire the cause of her affliction.

He soon learned that it arose from her father having warning to quit his farm.

"And what would you do now, my pretty Nelly, for any body that would just get the lease renewed for him at the *ould* rent ?"

"Do," cried the innocent girl; "why any thing in the world, Mr. O'Gahagan ; for God knows I'd give my heart's blood to make my poor father's mind *asy* again."

"Why then it shall be *asy*, and it is not

much trouble you'll have to take to make it so, when you'll only have to be kind to me, my sweet Nelly," cried O'Gahagan, folding her in his arms.

Mr. O'Gahagan, cunning as he was, had overshot his mark. Nelly's heart was as pure as it was affectionate, and no sooner did she perceive the price she was expected to pay for her father's lease, than she vehemently declared that she would a thousand times rather beg her bread with her parents, than be the kept miss, even of a *raal* gentleman.

The contempt implied in her words, for O'Gahagan was well aware that he had no claim to gentility, rendered him unusually savage; and had Nelly not possessed an uncommon portion both of spirit and strength, he would probably have taken by force, what neither persuasion nor bribery could have obtained. As it was, the poor girl escaped from him with difficulty, and not before he had solemnly sworn, "that he would be revenged by the destruction of her and hers."

Nelly had the prudence to keep what

had passed secret, but she soon found O'Gahagan had not forgotten his promise. In a few days afterwards her father was arrested, and lodged in the county jail, on suspicion of being an United Irishman.

Bryan Clogherty had been in the farmer's employ ever since he could handle a spade, and regardless alike of the farmer's remonstrances, and of his own personal safety, he knocked down the first man who offered to lay hold of his master.

"Take that villain into custody this moment," cried the enraged O'Gahagan, who had himself accompanied the officers; "I'll be bound he is one of them. I have suspected him of being a *croppy* this long time. I could swear to him, as well as to the other."

"Musha, bad luck to you, Mr. O'Gahagan;" cried Bryan. "Sure and you won't sell your soul to the devil outright, by swearing against two innocent men! It's you, and the like of you, that by grinding us down, have brought trouble into the country."

He was now made a prisoner, and car-

ried off with the former to the county jail, where they were both detained in durance till the sessions. Luckily for the farmer, Bryan and he were not separated; and the latter, who had strong animal spirits, and who loved his master with almost filial affection, did his utmost to cheer Mulrooney with the hope of a speedy deliverance.

Nor were his hopes vain. Notwithstanding that the emissaries of O'Gahagan swore through thick and thin, the prisoners were both acquitted; and the honest farmer returned to his own house for one night only, for on the following day his effects were seized for rent, and his weeping family obliged to seek another asylum.

The farmer's little savings had been scarcely sufficient to pay the law expences; and he saw himself now in his advanced age, with a body enfeebled by sickness and long confinement, obliged to trust for subsistence to his precarious earnings as a day-labourer.

The hardships of that situation soon proved too much for poor Mulrooney, a

neglected cold brought on a fever which quickly terminated his existence. From the moment of his confinement to that of his death, Bryan Clogherty had laboured by every means in his power to lighten the sufferings of the farmer and his family; and the last act of Mulrooney's life was to give his consent to the union of Bryan and Nelly, with one restriction, that of waiting till they had the means to purchase a few necessaries.

Bryan had some time before the farmer's death hired himself to his present master, but the inn was not much frequented, and although he saved every farthing he could, yet he had not been able to hoard near the sum which he wanted.

"How much," said Caroline, "do you want to make it up?"

"Oh, five pounds at the least, ma'am," said the widow; "but we must have patience."

When Caroline asked the question, she was not merely actuated by curiosity, for not having an idea that the sum could possibly be so small, she determined to

write to her friend Mrs. O'Connor, with whose benevolent disposition she was well acquainted, and request her to do something for them, by a subscription among her acquaintance. But when she heard the amount of the sum, the temptation to assist them herself was irresistible, and she had put the five pounds in the widow's hand, before she recollected that she had little more left than would be necessary to pay her expences to Rosebud Bower.

The chagrin which this recollection occasioned her was soon banished by the lively joy which her present diffused among her hospitable entertainers: a joy in which she participated so sincerely, that she retired to bed with a lighter heart than she had had for some time.

By the next morning the chaise was, as Bryan aptly enough expressed it, patched up; and Caroline quitted the cottage of the hospitable widow, who, as well as Nelly, followed the chaise for some time, with prayers and blessings.

She soon reached Rosebud Bower; the

appearance of which corresponded exactly with Mrs. O'Connor's description. She was shewn into a parlour where Lady Muggins was seated alone, busily employed in endeavouring to remodel an old crape cap. Her Ladyship condescended to rise at the approach of our heroine, and welcomed her in what she considered an elegant and gracious style; but both her manner, appearance, and language, were so completely vulgar, that the astonished Caroline could scarcely summon presence of mind to reply to her repeated assurances that she was *wery appy* to see her.

As her Ladyship's language might be as grating to the ears of our fair readers, as it was to those of Caroline, we shall take the liberty of rendering her speeches when they occur in our own manner.

After Caroline had sat a few minutes, Lady Muggins asked her if she chose any refreshment, observing at the same time, that they dined at five, and she never took any thing before dinner herself, because she thought it spoiled her appetite; and,

indeed, she did not consider it a wholesome practice to eat between meals.

Caroline could scarcely suppress a smile at this speech, but she assured her Ladyship that she felt no inclination to take any thing; and at her own desire she was shewn to the apartment allotted her.

It boasted little of elegance or comfort, but it was upon the whole more tolerable than the one she had occupied at Mrs. Langley's; for there was a blazing fire, and a large basket full of turf placed in one corner to replenish it.

Caroline soon changed her dress, and then sat down to ruminate upon her prospects. Her naturally gay spirits were still exhilarated by the happiness which she had left behind her in the cabin of the widow Mulhooney: and faithful to the resolution which she had formed when she began her journey, to view every thing on the bright side, she hoped to find the vulgarity of Lady Muggins less oppressive than the capricious tyranny of Mrs. Langley. "At least," thought she, "it must be more

easy to bear with a low-bred woman, who will tell me plainly what she expects, and who will vent her anger, if she feels any, openly, than with my late tormentor, who disguised so often a malicious heart under a smiling countenance."

CHAPTER XXX.

WHILE Caroline was engaged in those reflections, she received a summons to dinner; and on her entering the dining-room, she was greeted with hearty good-humour by Mr. M'Shaughlin, to whom Lady Muggins introduced her.

During dinner M'Shaughlin asked her to drink a glass of wine with him, enquiring at the same time which she preferred, port or sherry.

" I dare say Miss Vernon will prefer a glass of white currant wine to either," cried Lady Muggins eagerly. " I never drink any thing else myself."

" And if you have a fancy to poison yourself, my dear," said M'Shaughlin, " I am sure nobody ought to hinder you; but I hope Miss Vernon will oblige me by taking a glass of old port instead of your cursed slops."

Caroline instantly assented, but on glancing at Lady Muggins, she saw her countenance express so much anger, that not supposing it could be occasioned by the value of a glass of wine, she believed her ladyship was offended by her injudicious preference, and she determined to taste her favourite wine as soon as she decently could. But as if her ladyship had anticipated our heroine's intention, she returned the stopper to the decanter, observing, "that she never drank more at dinner than one glass."

The look which accompanied these words, as well as the tone in which they were uttered, convinced Caroline that she was expected to follow her ladyship's example; and she was very happy she had so easy a means of propitiating this frugal dame, whose parsimony she now found Mrs. O'Connor had not over-rated.

But she was yet a stranger both to the extent of her ladyship's avarice, and to the qualities which she expected to find in a companion, since she had been much more actuated by parsimony, than by a wish for

society in taking one. Never conceiving that a person in a dependent situation could object to perform any office, which was not altogether menial, her ladyship had allotted to her companion the various posts of reader, secretary, domestic spy, attendant under her own immediate inspection on her favourite pug-dog, Charmer; assistant to herself in re-modelling her old gowns and caps into fashionable dresses; and *toques* of a similar form to those presented monthly to the public in the modish magazines; and to crown all, hearer to her ladyship's perpetual complaints of the vile Irish, and their barbarous country.

She began the next morning by praising the style in which Caroline's dresses were made; enquiring whether they were her own work, and wishing very much that she could have her's made in the same style. Caroline, who really had great taste in dress, cheerfully offered her assistance, which was accepted without ceremony, and the ladies sat down with *La Belle Assemblée* before them, to transform a

faded blue sarsnet gown into a robe *à la Ninon.*

But their progress, with which Lady Muggins, who in fact did little more than look on, expressed herself delighted, was suddenly stopped by an impediment of no small moment. The gown had unluckily been made when it was the fashion to wear very scanty dresses, and they were now, on the contrary, of an easy fullness, particularly the robe *à la Ninon.* What was to be done? Caroline's invention was totally at a stand; and her Ladyship having spent an hour in fretting, exclaiming against her ill-luck, and worrying Caroline because she could not add to the width of the gown, hit at last upon the happy expedient of taking a piece of satin of a different colour to make a new body, and piecing out the skirt with the old one.

This bright thought perfectly restored her ladyship's good humour; and she told Caroline that they must make haste to finish their work, because she intended to give her in the evening a most delightful treat.

Though not much elated with this promise, Caroline proceeded cheerfully with her task, which she finished, with very little assistance from her ladyship, by the dinner hour. But she was really sorry for its completion, when she found that the delightful treat was a mawkish novel, which, as Mr. M'Shaughlin spent the evening abroad, her ladyship had the conscience to make her read aloud till bed-time.

Spite of Caroline's weariness she could not help being sometimes amused at her ladyship's rapture. "Nothing was ever so *natral!*" exclaimed she several times; "and then the monstrous fine speeches of that Lord Augustus, What d'ye callem, I am sure they are enough to melt a heart of stone. I can't think, for my part, how Lady *Sophonisbar* could refuse him."

"We must suppose," cried Caroline, "that her ladyship's heart was adamant," closing the book as she spoke.

"Oh mercy, my dear Miss Vernon! Why you would not leave off now, we

are only just getting into the interesting part?"

"But," said Caroline, with difficulty suppressing a yawn, "I thought it was near your ladyship's general hour of retiring to rest."

"Oh, dear no; we have an hour or more good yet, so pray proceed:" which poor Caroline did, till she was in every sense completely fatigued.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Two or three days passed in a similar manner, except that cards were substituted for novels after tea, to oblige Mr. M'Shaughlin; and Caroline, who began to hope that she was thoroughly initiated in the duties of her situation, wrote to her kind friend Mrs. O'Connor, and also to Fanny, that she was more satisfied than she had expected to be with Lady Muggins. But the very day after she had dispatched her letter, an incident occurred which placed her ladyship in a new and most unpleasant point of view.

"I have been thinking, my dear Miss Vernon," said she to Caroline, "that you sit too closely to work, and that it would be better for you to stir about a little more."

"The weather has been very unfavourable since I came here," replied Caroline,

"or else, as I am a very early riser, I should have taken a morning walk."

"Oh there is no possibility," replied her ladyship, "of venturing out of doors; but you might go up and down the house, it would be exercise for you, you know."

As the house itself was of that size, that one could make the tour of it in five minutes, Caroline thought this proposal truly ridiculous, but not knowing what to reply to it, she remained silent.

"And besides the benefit to your health," resumed Lady Muggins, "you might also be of great service to me, by moving about a little more than you do."

"How so, my lady?" asked the surprised Caroline.

"Why, you must know, Miss Vernon, that I am partly, through the folly of Mr. M'Shaughlin, very badly off with my servants, for he won't suffer me to have any but those odious Irish *creters*, whose whole delight it is to waste and destroy my substance from morning till night. I brought my own maid with me to be sure, and if she had behaved properly I should

always have kept her, but the others soon made her as bad as themselves, and I was glad to pack her off. Now as I have been saying their extravagance is enough to ruin me, and if I go after them myself they are so rude and impudent you have no notion. Why would you believe it, they downright abuse me to my face? But you know they would never suspect you; and if you would just be up and down a bit, for you know you might find twenty excuses to run in and out of the kitchen, you could give me an item of their goings on, and we would soon find a way to match them, I promise you."

During this harangue, Caroline's blood had literally boiled, but luckily for her own peace, she had at last, though with great difficulty, learned the art of curbing the natural haughtiness of her temper. After a pause of some minutes, which Lady Muggins felt no temptation to break, for in truth she was rather abashed by Caroline's steadfast gaze, our heroine calmly, but firmly declined the task, which her ladyship would have imposed upon her.

"Dear me!" cried her ladyship, in a tone between anger and pouting, "I can't think, Miss Vernon, how you can be so squeamish: I am sure I would not mind doing such a thing to oblige a friend."

"I should be very happy to oblige your ladyship in any thing, that did not militate against my own ideas of right."

"Why dear me, Miss Vernon! one would think that you were a methodist: I am sure I have not asked you to do any thing wrong."

"Your ladyship," cried Caroline, "forgets how truly odious the character of a spy is; besides, were I even inclined to oblige you, my acquiescence would be of very little avail; your servants would soon discover what had brought me among them; and it is not likely that they, who have presumed to forget the respect due to you, would forbear to insult me."

Lady Muggins was silenced, but she was not convinced, and Caroline's determined opposition to this favourite plan of her's, threw her into a sulky fit, which lasted for three days.

During this time she never addressed either Caroline or her husband, when she could possibly avoid it; and the little she was compelled to say she took care to deliver in the most ungracious manner.

M'Shaughlin, who was accustomed to her temper, treated her sullenness with a gay disregard, called her as usual his dear chicken, and without noticing that she never joined in their conversation, talked to Caroline in his general good-humoured way.

Caroline was very cautious in her replies, for the conversation frequently turned upon Ireland; and M'Shaughlin, who delighted in provoking his wife, never failed to give it a preference over every spot in the habitable globe. Caroline could have laughed heartily at his gasconade, had she not perceived that Lady Muggins took all he said in a serious light, and she was fearful of exasperating her ladyship still farther.

The arrival of the post on the fourth day of her ladyship's silent fit roused her

from the indulgence of it. She had received three letters from London, which contained what to her was very important intelligence, a description of a city *fête*, an account of the price of provisions, and a hundred gossiping details from the scandalous chronicle of Cheapside.

These letters had the effect of completely restoring her ladyship's good-humour. She even condescended to read aloud to Caroline several passages in them, which were calculated to display her own importance. But poor Caroline thought she paid rather dear for her restoration to favour, when she found the next day that she was to have the honour of acting as her ladyship's amanuensis.

The first thing which her ladyship did after breakfast, was to produce some coarse paper to make, as she said, foul copies of her answers. The phrase, indeed, was perfectly correct, for they were erased, interlined, shortened, and lengthened, till poor Caroline's fingers were so cramped, that she could hardly hold the pen, and

what was worst of all, she found that she was expected to do homage to her ladyship's epistolary talents.

"I dare say," cried her ladyship, when she had finished the third letter, "that you are quite surprised, Miss Vernon, how I can keep so many things in my head. I suppose you never saw such letters in all your life before."

"Indeed, my lady," said Caroline, "I must own I never did."

Wholly unsuspicious of Miss Vernon's equivoque, Lady Muggins smiled with conscious triumph, at what she thought the homage due to her talents, and during the remainder of the day she was in high good humour.

It appeared, however, as if her ladyship's smiles were never to be lasting. She had a visit to pay in a day or two afterwards to a lady who lived at some distance, and she could not take Charmer, because he had once before bit one of this very lady's children. She had made some ineffectual attempts to engage Caroline to relieve her from the trouble of washing, combing,

and nursing this disagreeable animal. Caroline, when she could no longer parry those attacks, had told her plainly she did not chuse to do it, and recommended to her to consign Charmer to the care of the house-maid.

"I know, Miss Vernon," cried her ladyship, "that you have no great liking for my poor Charmer; but although I never can prevail upon you to pay the dear love any attention, I don't think you would let him be ill used?"

"Your ladyship may be certain that I would not; no one can reprobate cruelty to animals more than I do."

"Then do, pray, take care of him during my absence. I don't suppose you would wish to go out; and as you know how fond he is of company, promise me that you will keep him with you all the time I am out."

Caroline readily gave the desired promise, and she conscientiously kept her word; for although the uncommon fineness of the day tempted her strongly to indulge in a walk, she resisted her inclina-

tion, as she did not wish to leave Charmer behind, and she was fearful that his quarrelsome disposition might lead him into some scrape if she took him with her.

Caroline was seated busily employed with her pen when Lady Muggins returned. The dog, who had been perfectly quiet before, no sooner heard his mistress's voice than he began to bark as loudly as he could, totally unheeded by our heroine; but in a few seconds Lady Muggins bustled in, exclaiming: "what is the matter with my pretty pet? Pray, Miss Vernon, what have you been doing to Charmer?"

It was in vain for Caroline to protest that she had been doing nothing to the animal, her ladyship was quite certain that the dear sensible creature would never have barked in such a dreadful manner without reason. And glancing a look of resentment at Caroline's employment, she declared that "it was very hard to be so treated after she had gone out without leaving her any thing to do, on purpose that she might amuse the sweet love."

The contempt which Caroline could not help feeling for her ladyship, checked her resentment at this absurd and impertinent speech, and she contented herself with replying, "when my friend Mrs. O'Connor engaged me as your ladyship's companion, she assured me of the treatment due to a gentlewoman; and she certainly did not inform me I was either to be your sempstress, or the attendant of your dog."

The name of Mrs. O'Connor effectually silenced Lady Muggins, who directly replied, "that for her part she did not understand what Miss Vernon meant, as to a sempstress. She was sure the trifles she asked her to do took up very little time, and as for the dog she was resolved that she would never trouble her with him again; no, poor dear creature, he should not be any more out of her sight."

Caroline made no reply, and nothing farther passed upon the subject. Our heroine, whose resentment never lasted beyond the moment of offence, very speedily forgot it. Not so Lady Muggins, who be-

gan very heartily to repent of having taken a person into her house, whom she could not render in all respects subservient to her will, and whom she dared not tyrannize over.

Nevertheless, she found Caroline in some respects extremely useful. Her salary was small; and she certainly was very little expense to her. A glance at her dress, which chanced to be the identical robe *à la Ninon*, for which she was indebted to our heroine's taste and ingenuity, determined her narrow-souled ladyship to keep measures with her if she could; and she assumed a semblance of cordiality, which Caroline, who was naturally unsuspicious, never conceived was a veil to a rooted dislike.

This dislike soon amounted almost to abhorrence, in consequence of an incident in itself apparently trivial. We have before observed that M'Shaughlin delighted in tormenting her ladyship by exaggerated praises of Ireland; which she never failed to return by abusing it and its inhabitants in the bitterest terms.

It chanced one day that Bryan Clogherty and Nelly, who had been some time married, called to see their benefactress. Lady Muggins, who dreaded the approach of any one, whose appearance made it likely that they would diminish the generally small stock of cold provisions which her larder afforded, asked Caroline abruptly who those low people were; and was informed that it was the driver and his wife, to whom she had been obliged for accommodation when the chaise broke down on her journey.

It was a foible of her ladyship's to suspect that any one whom she interrogated never told her the truth, at least not the whole truth; but although she sifted Caroline on this occasion with more than her usual address, she could learn nothing farther. Nevertheless she persisted in thinking that there was, as she expressed it, something behind the curtain, which would come out one time or other.

That very evening her ladyship took occasion to harangue her husband, on what she termed his folly, in sending some relief

to a sick cottager. She declared that the man's illness was a mere sham to get money, that he might indulge in idleness; and inflamed by her husband's sarcasms on her want of charity, she protested that the whole of the lower class were savage wretches, incapable of any thing good.

"Upon my salvation!" vociferated the enraged M'Shaughlin, "its a shame for you to speak so against your conscience; only to be sure you have none. Oh! and I wish you had only been as candid as you are now when you were courting me! Sure, you should never have degraded your quality, by marrying one of those good for nothing *cratures*."

"Bless me!" cried her ladyship; "why I haven't said any thing to you; wasn't I speaking of the lower class?"

"Sure, and you were, and myself is not one bit ashamed to say that I belong to them. Aye, you need not knit your brows; you know very well that I did not impose upon you. I *tould* you before we were married, that my poor father had nothing

at all at all, but a little cabin, and a potato garden to leave among five of us. Hold! I forgot though, there was one thing more, a pig, and as fine a one as ever your late husband cut up in his life."

This reference to the late Sir Ralph's occupation, rekindled all her fury, and turning suddenly to Caroline she said: "It was very hard to have a person eating her bread, who never took her part in any thing; and she was sure Miss Vernon must be silent out of opposition to her, for she was certain that she must be of her opinion."

"As long as your ladyship would suffer me to remain neuter," said Caroline, "I avoided giving an opinion; but since you have called for one, I must tell you that if I am to judge from my own experience, I must positively contradict your ladyship, since I have met with several instances of goodness of heart in the lowest class of the Irish; and I think they want nothing but cultivation to render them as much an honour to their country, as the English peasantry is justly said to be to Great Britain."

Lady Muggins appeared for some moments incapable of replying. As to M'Shaughlin, his raptures on finding that Caroline was a staunch friend to his country, were so boisterous, that she was glad to escape from them by taking refuge in her own apartment.

CHAPTER XXXII.

No sooner had her ladyship recovered from her amazement than she poured forth a volley of invectives against Caroline, whose part M'Shaughlin took with more zeal than prudence; for in fact every word which he said in her defence added fuel to her ladyship's rage. In a voice nearly unintelligible from passion, she told him he ought to be ashamed to take part with a trumpery menial against her, but she dared say that he had his reasons for it. She had long suspected that there was something between them, and now she was convinced of it.

"What's that you say?" cried the incensed M'Shaughlin, starting up. "Why you imp of malice and mischief, do you think that I am such a devil incarnate, as to have improper designs on such an angel as that; or even if I had, would you be vil-

lainous enough to suppose that they could succeed."

Lady Muggins, who was really intimidated at his violence, now said in a whimpering tone, "I am sure there must be some reason for the attention which you pay her."

"Yes," cried M'Shaughlin, "there is a reason, and only you have no more heart than a broomstick, you would know it without my telling you. She is young, friendless, and in my house; and shame and sorrow both light upon me when I suffer her to be ill-treated under my roof!"

All the fire of his country sparkled in the eyes of the hospitable Irishman as he made this declaration; but his narrow-minded wife, incapable herself of a generous or humane sensation, found it a confirmation of her suspicions. Termagant as she was, however, she dreaded provoking her husband any farther, but she resolved to take the earliest opportunity of wreaking all her vengeance on the head of poor Caroline.

Deeply did she now regret having taken

advantage of the civilities which she had received from Mrs. O'Connor to apply to that lady for a companion. Had Caroline been recommended by a person of whom she did not stand in awe, she might have tormented her into desiring her dismission; for although she fully believed that M'Shaughlin admired her, she was not stupid enough to suppose that the partiality was mutual. But although she would have fancied herself safe from Caroline's complaints to her husband, she dreaded the representations which the O'Connors might make to him, and she wished a thousand times that she had never thought of having a companion.

But while she was planning and rejecting schemes to mortify, if she could not dismiss Caroline, an event happened which left her at full liberty to pursue her malicious purposes. This was the sudden death of Mr. O'Connor, an event which had such an effect upon his lady, that she was ordered to Lisbon for the recovery of her health.

Caroline participated sincerely in her

friend's distress, and M'Shaughlin shed tears of unaffected regret for his worthy employer. As he had some business to transact in Dublin, and was particularly desirous to see Mrs. O'Connor before her departure, he determined to set out in a few days for Dublin: but he was anxious to have a little private conversation with Caroline before his departure.

The vigilance with which Lady Muggins watched his every motion rendered this impossible; but as she saw clearly that he wished it, it had the effect of increasing her spite to Caroline.

If any thing had been wanting to raise her jealousy to the highest pitch, it was a conversation which she had with her husband the night before his departure. Fearful that she would take the opportunity of his absence to ill-use Miss Vernon, he laid his positive commands upon her to treat our heroine with kindness; but conscious that he had seldom used the imperative mood, and fearful on this occasion of not being attended to, he called to his assistance the powerful auxiliaries, terror,

and bribery. In case of her compliance, her ladyship was to be rewarded by twenty pounds worth of new fashions; and if she disobeyed, he was to let loose upon her the whole weight of his resentment. Our readers must perceive that M'Shaughlin was not much vexed in the intricacies of the human heart, else he would have known that the very anxiety be expressed for Caroline's comfort, was sufficient to whet his wife's jealous rage.

In effect, the very day after his departure, Lady Muggins told Caroline with even less ceremony than a well-bred person would use with a menial servant, that in two days her quarter would expire, and as they had not agreed for *warning*, and her ladyship had had quite enough of *companions*, she desired that our heroine would leave her house.

To evade compliance with a request delivered in such terms was impossible; and Caroline had no sooner signified her intended acquiescence, than she hastened to her chamber to conceal the tears which this cruel mandate forced from her eyes.

Her salary from Lady Muggins was thirty pounds a year. Of this sum one quarter was all that she had to receive. To return to London with such a sum was impossible, and she had no longer any friends in Dublin to assist her in getting a situation.

Her tears fell fast when she contemplated her present destitute and forlorn state, and contrasted it with what it had been during the life of her too indulgent father. But they followed with added bitterness, when she reflected that her present misfortune was attributable only to herself; since she had persisted in becoming the inmate of Lady Muggins, in defiance both of the advice and wishes of her kind friend Mrs. O'Connor.

To grieve for the past was useless, and she could only resolve to submit patiently to the evil which she had brought upon herself, and to act with more judgment and propriety in future. The recollection that she had for some time past successfully exerted herself to conquer her naturald efects cheered and invigorated her spi-

rits; and after an hour spent in her own chamber, she was able to meet Lady Muggins at tea with some appearance of cheerfulness, to the very great mortification of her ladyship, who occupied herself till supper-time in vain attempts to quarrel with her.

Let us now say a few words of Miss Dormer, whom the reader will probably recollect we left engaged in the tuition of Mr. Selden's niece, Helena Mowbray. Mr. Selden, who was much attached to his sister, and extremely fond of her little girl, had always passed much of his time at Mrs. Mowbray's house, but he was now more with her than ever; and though his ostensible reason was to watch the progress of Helena, Mrs. Mowbray was not slow in discovering that his real one was a wish for the enjoyment of Fanny's society.

This lady had long been desirous to see her brother married, but she could have wished that his choice had fallen upon a woman more richly endowed with the gifts of fortune than Fanny. The rapid improvement which Helena made under

her tuition, as well as the great affection which she expressed for her, soon conciliated Mrs. Mowbray in a great measure; and although she could not be said to heartily wish that the match might take place, she resolved to take no steps to oppose it.

Marriage, however, was not in Mr. Selden's thoughts. He certainly admired Fanny more than any woman he had ever seen, and he would have been sensibly pained if deprived of her society; but he had once suffered by an imprudent passion, and in consequence he had forsworn love for ever. Friendship, therefore, and brotherly affection, was all, as he gravely protested to his sister, that he could feel for any woman.

Although Mrs. Mowbray laughed at his assertions, she did not suspect him of imposing upon her, but she believed what in fact was the truth, that he had imposed upon himself. Fanny, who had not an idea of his secret preference, was delighted with his kindness and attention; and her

letters to Caroline were filled with his praises, and those of Mrs. Mowbray.

As Miss Dormer's allowance was liberal, she would, if she had had the least suspicion of Caroline's actual situation, have remitted her a sum sufficient for any emergency. But Caroline had carefully concealed her poverty, nor could she think without a pang of revealing it.

To reveal it now was, however, absolutely necessary, since to think of returning even to Dublin with the trifle she had would have been madness. She felt extremely averse to remaining in the immediae neighbourhood of Lady Muggins till she had heard from Fanny, and after a little deliberation, she determined to try whether the widow Mulrooney could not accommodate her for a few days, till the expected remittance should arrive.

As it was not more than five miles to the widow's cabin from Rosebud Bower, she got a messenger to take a letter for her early the next morning, which was answered by the widow, who came herself to thank our heroine, and to assure her

of the best accommodation she could supply.

Caroline wrote immediately to Miss Dormer; but as there was a post town within a mile of the widow's cottage, she begged that her answer might be addressed to the post-office, to be left till called for. Having dispatched her letter, she packed up her clothes, and the following morning she bade adieu to Lady Muggins; upon whom, though without intending it, she inflicted a very severe punishment; for her ladyship feared that her stay in the neighbourhood might be protracted till the return of Mr. M'Shaughlin: in which case a discovery of her conduct appeared inevitable, and she already trembled at the idea of the storm which it would produce.

The widow's accommodations were indeed of the humblest order, but Caroline had lost her fastidiousness; and the grateful attentions of those poor people, who almost worshipped her, made, in her opinion, ample amends for the privations

which she should be obliged to endure in her temporary abode under their roof.

Until the arrival of her expected letter, she resolved to beguile the time with her pencil and her needle; and she amused herself at intervals with learning from Nelly some Irish airs, the simple melody of which suited her voice admirably. The time at last came when she hoped to receive a letter, but day followed day, and still no letter arrived. Impressed with the idea that her letter had been lost, for of Fanny's friendship she did not entertain a doubt, she wrote again, and again suffered all the pangs of suspence. Every day did the widow go to the post-office, but, alas! her answer to Caroline's eager enquiry was always the same. Five weeks elapsed in this manner, and the unfortunate Caroline, unable to divine a reason for the silence of her friend, could only suppose that it was occasioned by illness, perhaps by death.

For nearly a week she combated this dreadful idea, but at the end of that time, hope and courage both failed her. The

continual agitation of her spirits affected her health, and she became gradually impressed with a belief that it was the will of Heaven she should expiate her offences by an obscure and early death.

The fever on her spirits, which had given birth to this idea daily increased; and in the seventh week after her departure from Lady Muggins's, she took to her bed, in the firm persuasion that she should never leave it with life. The poor widow and her children had exerted themselves to the utmost to procure her necessaries, and they now applied to the village Esculapius, who happened to have some skill in his profession, and who had humanity enough to exercise it, though without a prospect of ever being paid; for Caroline could not prevail upon herself to apply to Lady Muggins: and M'Shaughlin was not yet returned.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

ONE evening, as Doctor Leary, so the apothecary is always styled by courtesy in the country, was just dismounting at his own door, after a visit to our heroine, a young and gentlemanly man entered his shop hastily, and enquired in an agitated voice, whether he did not attend a young lady of the name of Vernon, in his professional capacity. He replied in the affirmative. The stranger enquired the nature of her disorder, and begged the apothecary to be explicit as to her danger. Leary frankly told him, that it would be a miracle indeed if she recovered; but he almost repented of his explicitness, when he saw the stranger turn pale as ashes, and lean against the wall to support himself from falling.

"Oh Heavens, have I then arrived only to witness her dissolution!" exclaimed he

in a tone of so much anguish, that the good-natured apothecary, in pity for his evident sufferings, strove to inspire him with hope, although he was himself almost devoid of it.

At the earnest request of the stranger, Leary accompanied him to the widow's. The moment the poor woman saw him she burst into tears. "Ah! Doctor!" cried she, "our poor young lady——"

"How is she? Is there any change?"

"Oh yes, and a dreadful one it is. Her senses are quite gone, only a few minutes ago she raved violently."

Leary hastily entered her chamber, and at the moment that he did so, she began to sing one of those Irish airs which she had learnt from Nelly. The wild pathos of her tones robbed the stranger of all his self-command. "Oh, Caroline! dear lost Caroline!" cried he, rushing into the room, "why, why cannot I give my life for thine?"

She was sitting up in her bed, which was so placed, that she had a full view of him as he entered: fixing her eyes upon

him for a moment, as if in recognition, she wildly exclaimed: "I know your errand; you come to take me to my father!" and holding out her arms to him, she fainted.

The stranger thought that she was gone for ever; and Leary was himself for some moments of the same opinion: but at last she shewed some signs of life. Leary forced the stranger into the outer room, and by the assistance of strong volatiles she soon recovered. She relapsed, however, almost immediately, and during some hours, a succession of faintings held her suspended between life and death.

At last her senses seemed perfectly restored, but she appeared almost expiring from weakness. Leary's hopes were however stronger than they had been for some time, and he hastened to impart a portion of them to the stranger.

Never had the apothecary witnessed such rapture as his intelligence caused. The stranger thanked and blessed him with a fervour which brought tears into his eyes. An express was dispatched instantly for a

physician of eminence, who was within five-and-twenty miles: and Leary, at the earnest desire of the stranger, promised to remain with Caroline during the night. She soon sank intò a tranquil sleep. Leary would have persuaded the stranger also to take some repose, but he declared that he found it impossible to taste of any till her safety was ascertained.

" If ever there was true love on the face of the earth," whispered Nelly Clogherty, " I am sure, Mother, it is what that gentleman feels for Miss Vernon."

Nelly was right. The stranger, in whom our readers have perhaps already recognised Mr. Saville, had never ceased to love Caroline; and, but for the cruel policy of Reginald Pembroke, he would, the instant that the intelligence of her father's death reached him, have flown to rescue her from poverty and sorrow.

Our readers have already seen that Mr. Pembroke had industriously propagated the report of her death. Various motives urged him to this falsity. The unfortunate Mordaunt had stood so fair in the opinion

of the world, that the single crime which stained his name did not, as Pembroke hoped it would have done, cover his memory with complete opprobrium. There were people, too, who did not scruple to assert that Mr. Pembroke had practised for years upon the weakness of the senior Mordaunt, whose grandson he had purposely led to disobey him, in order that he might possess himself of that property which ought, in justice, to have been Mordaunt's.

This assertion was partly true and partly false. Pembroke had certainly led Mordaunt step by step to disobey his grandfather, but he was actuated in the first instance, by his passion for Emma Neville, whose hand he knew he could not otherwise hope to obtain. Mr. Mordaunt, senior, in revenge for his grandson's disobedience, resolved to settle his property upon Emma and her heirs; but although Reginald Pembroke's specious behaviour conquered, in some measure, the dislike which he had first avowed to the match, he never was cordially reconciled to him: and he

took care that he should not have the power of alienating from Mrs. Pembroke and her children any part of the property which he bequeathed to them.

Mrs. Pembroke's ruling passion was the love of admiration. Under an appearance of reserve, and even of timidity, she concealed the most inordinate vanity; and she never forgave Mordaunt for preferring another woman to herself. But though vain, she was not inhuman: had she known that Caroline lived, she would have considered it a duty to have placed her above want. Pembroke, who was equally sordid and unprincipled, could not endure the idea of bestowing on the desolate girl even a small portion of that wealth, to which she had in reality the sole right; and finding, from the pains which she took to conceal herself, that she was not likely to make a voluntary appeal to his or his family's humanity, he gladly availed himself of her dangerous illness and subsequent concealment to propagate a report of her death.

The pang which Saville felt when the intelligence reached him, convinced him

of her power over his heart; and forgetful of those faults which had convinced his judgment that their union must have been unhappy, he deeply lamented that he had not made an effort to secure her hand. At the time he heard the dreadful news he was in Scotland, where he remained till a short period before Caroline quitted Lady Muggins. A chance meeting with Fanny revealed to him, that the lamented girl still existed; and he would have instantly flown to Ireland to proffer her a brother's love and services, but Fanny, who had heard from her only the day before, assured him that she was upon her return to England, and counselled him to wait her arrival in London.

Fanny had, the moment that her friend's letter reached her, inclosed a bank bill for thirty pounds, and invited her, in the name of Mrs. Mowbray, to that lady's house. The affectionate Fanny, indeed, hoped, that she should soon have a permanent and comfortable home for her beloved friend, for she could no longer be blind to the evident impression she had made on Mr.

Selden: in fact, the state of her own heart had quickened her perception; and once convinced that she possessed his, she believed him too honourable to trifle with her feelings.

The man who kept the post-office where Caroline had directed her letter to be left, was a drunken, unprincipled fellow. He had formed a determination to emigrate to America as soon as he could realize money sufficient to carry him there: finding that Caroline's letter contained money, he was tempted to see what the amount was; and this he had no sooner discovered, than he resolved to appropriate it to his own use. It would have been fortunate for Caroline had he decamped immediately; but this not suiting his purpose, he intercepted and destroyed her letters and those of Miss Dormer, in order to conceal the theft of which he had been guilty.

Let us now return to poor Caroline, who was soon pronounced out of danger. We may believe, that the life she had thus miraculously recovered, possessed double value

in her eyes, when she learned the happiness with which it was likely to be attended. Saville's transports when her recovery was first pronounced possible, the emotion which he vainly strove to restrain when he was first allowed to see her, all spoke a language which she could not misunderstand. He was the son of her lamented father's choice; and if even when vanity had deadened every better feeling, her heart had acknowledged his merit, our readers will not wonder that it now beat for him with a passion as fervent as his own.

Though Saville's every look was expressive of his feelings, he gave no utterance to them. He resolved to wait till she was under the roof of Mrs. Mowbray before he renewed his addresses, and should she then decline his hand, he determined, through the medium of Fanny, to insist upon his right, as the friend of her deceased father, to shield her from poverty or dependance, by dividing with her his fortune, small as it was.

As soon as Caroline was able to travel,

a respectable female was engaged to accompany her to London. She bore the journey extremely well, and when once more pressed to the bosom of her beloved Fanny, she fancied that she had not a wish ungratified.

Mrs. Mowbray welcomed her with the kindness and politeness, which she thought due to the friend of her future sister; for as such she now considered Fanny, who had a few days before the arrival of Caroline promised to bestow her hand upon Mr. Selden in the course of the ensuing month.

A few days after Caroline's arrival, she accompanied Miss Dormer to make some purchases, and at the moment that they were stepping out of the carriage, young Pembroke, who was passing them, recognised Caroline. He stopped directly, and expressed in the most animated terms his delight at again seeing her. Caroline had not forgotten his defence of her father, but she checked the cordiality with which she felt inclined to greet him, lest she

should raise hopes which she never meant to fulfil.

On their return they found Saville waiting for them. Fanny mentioned to him their having just met young Pembroke; and this led to a detail of Caroline's acquaintance with him during her stay at Mrs. Langley's.

Fanny declared herself struck with his uncommon elegance both of person and manners. " I have been told," continued she, " that he resembles his father exceedingly. "I hope, for his own sake, that the resemblance does not extend to his mind."

Caroline assured her that it did not; and launched out into encomiums on her cousin, which were so many daggers to the heart of poor Saville; who immediately conceived that this fascinating cousin had, during her stay at Mrs. Langley's, secured himself an interest in her heart.

But could she think of bestowing her hand upon a man whose father had robbed her's of his birthright? " Impossible," said Saville to himself; yet he could not help

fearing that it was not impossible, as he listened to the warm praises which Caroline bestowed upon him.

"To-morrow," thought Saville, "I will know my fate;" and as he took his leave, he solicited a few minutes private conversation the next morning with Caroline. The conscious air with which she granted his request, would have convinced a vain man that she surmised his reason for asking a private interview, and that he had nothing to apprehend from her cruelty; but Saville was not vain, and he spent the night in endeavouring to fortify his mind for the refusal which he feared awaited him the next day.

At the moment that he entered Caroline's apartment the next morning, she was folding up a letter, and he perceived that she was visibly agitated. "All is over," thought he: "she has received a proposal from Pembroke, and she means to accept it."

So fully was he impressed with this idea, that he could not open the purport of his visit for a considerable time, and when he

did, it was with a trepidation and aukwardness, which had not Caroline's agitation been as great as his own, would have tempted her to smile.

As love scenes seldom bear repetition, we shall pass over Saville's raptures when Caroline blushed consent. So successfully did he exert his influence with Fanny, that she prevailed on her friend to let the same day witness their nuptial vows.

Prior to that event, Caroline wrote to Pembroke; who had, as Saville truly conjectured, renewed the offer which he made her in Ireland, of his hand; and while she declined it in a manner the least likely to hurt his feelings, she acknowledged her relationship to him, and warmly thanked him for the respect with which he had treated the memory of her ill-fated father.

Pembroke's answer evinced the excellence of his heart. He thanked her for the confidence she had reposed in him, and, in the most delicate manner, insisted upon returning to her that portion of her great grandfather's property which he inhe-

rited, declaring that he could not keep it consistently with his own sense of right, since he considered that it was in justice her's.

Had Caroline consulted only her own feelings, she would unhesitatingly rejected this generous offer, but she considered it a duty to submit it to Saville.

"Your cousin is indeed the generous character you described him, my dear Caroline," cried he; "but in the acceptance or rejection of his offer, you must be guided entirely by your own sense of what is right. Only remember that if you accept it, it must be for your own separate use: my fortune, though small, is I am convinced sufficient for our happiness, and millions could not add to your value in my eyes."

"I own," replied Caroline, "that your determination gives me unspeakable pleasure. I hope I am not now actuated by pride; but when I reflect at what a price my poor father purchased those estates, and how little they ever conduced to his happiness; as well as the pernicious effects

which the belief that I should ultimately possess them, produced upon my mind, I feel as if I should be happier without that portion of them, which the generous Desmond so nobly offers to resign to me."

"My own Caroline," cried Saville as he folded her in his arms, "how entirely are our feelings on this subject in unison! Oh, may they always continue so!"

Pembroke, however, declares that the property which his cousin has resolutely persisted in rejecting, shall be only held by him in trust for her children.

And now, reader, we have only to tell thee, that in the enjoyment of peace, competence, and domestic felicity, our once faulty heroine daily blesses those salutary trials to which her present happiness may be considered owing. No longer enslaved by vanity, she has completely conquered those baleful passions which a false indulgence strengthened. Her conduct as a wife, forms at once the felicity and the pride of her husband: nor does she, though the fondest of mothers, ever lose sight of those salutary restraints which her own

experience has convinced her are necessary to form the youthful mind to virtue and to happiness.

Reginald Pembroke still lives to enjoy his ill-gotten wealth: but his amiable son, to his great mortification, remains single; nor, though much importuned by his family to marry, does he seem at all inclined to comply with their wishes.

The mortification which Mrs. Langley experienced, from the total neglect of the gentlemen, had such an effect upon her temper, that she gradually lost the influence she once had over her husband. They have lately parted, and she is now as miserable as she deserves, in a vain attempt to support appearances upon the very slender allowance which he makes her.

The good-natured M'Shaughlin has got rid of his torment. She died some time ago, and he protests that she has given him such a surfeit of matrimony, that he never means to enter the state again.

Nelly Gallagher has been, with the full consent of Saville, placed by Caroline in her nursery; where, under Mrs. Saville's

immediate inspection, she conscientiously performs her duty, and is the favourite, and humble friend, of the whole family.

The worthy widow Mulrooney, and her son and daughter, were not forgotten by Mrs. Saville: who, to this day, occasionally denies herself a new dress, or some other indulgence, in order to bestow upon them the money it would cost.

Mr. and Mrs. Selden enjoy the happiness they merit; and Helena Mowbray, now a very fine young woman, continues as fond of her aunt as she used to be of her governess.

The violent passion which Mrs. Guzzlemore flattered herself she had inspired the alderman with, seems to be superseded by his old *penchant* for *calipash* and *calipee*. She consoles herself, however, for his indifference, by out-dashing most of the city *belles*, who, in their turn, laugh at her affectation, and ridicule her pretensions. She repented exceedingly of her behaviour to Fanny, when she learned her union with the rich Mr. Selden; and the latter has more than once amused her friend

Mrs. Saville, with the aukward endeavours of Mrs. Guzzlemore to renew their acquaintance. She has even condescended to make some advances to her former pupil, but Caroline is too happy in her own domestic circle, to be allured into the renewal of an acquaintance with a woman, whom, though she forgives, she cannot help recollecting, (fostered by her deceit and adulation) those faults which sharpened to an insupportable degree the stings of adversity.

END OF VOL. I.

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